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*A QUARTERLY REVIEW
to explore the implications
of Christianity for our times*

FOLLIET • BUBER • SCOTT • CHENU • MARROU
BRUNO DE JESUS-MARIE • ONG • DE WAELEHENS

CONTENTS

Vol. VII, No. 2—SPRING 1957

The Third Revolution	JOSEPH FOLLIET	97
The Validity and Limitation of the Political Principle	MARTIN BUBER	109
The Church is not Clerical	H. I. MARROU	117
System, Space and Intellect in Renaissance Symbolism	WALTER J. ONG	123
The Collaboration of Vision in the Poetic Act	NATHAN A. SCOTT, Jr.	137
St. John of the Cross and Modern Psychology	BRUNO DE JESUS MARIE	154
Science, Phenomenology, Ontology	ALPHONSE DE WAELEHENS	167
Towards a Theology of Work	M. D. CHENU	175
Notes on other Publications		184

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THE THIRD REVOLUTION

JOSEPH FOLLIET

IF THE EVENTS in Hungary made such an impression on international opinion, on both sides of the iron curtain, it is not simply because of their dramatic horror, but because they took on the symbolic aspect of flames and blood. They were the dreadful thunderbolt which follows distant rumbling—so powerful that no ears could refuse to listen, or the pitiless flash of light which succeeds fugitive glimmerings—so demanding that it unseals even the eyes of those who would most gladly keep them closed. Here in France many intellectuals, formerly *progressistes* or allies of Communism, publicly manifested their opposition to the action of the U.S.S.R. in Hungary, an indication of the depth of this current of opinion; on this occasion, events spoke too clearly and loudly for troubled consciences to be able to reassure themselves with abstractions.

The instinct of public opinion was right: in the disturbances which have stirred Communist Europe in the last few years, and particularly since the Khrushchev report and de-Stalinization there is a good deal more than another political convulsion. The uprisings of

the workers of East Berlin and of Eastern Germany, the strikes in Czechoslovakia, the outbreaks in Russian slave labor camps, particularly at Vorkuta, the demonstrations at Poznam and the half-liberation of Poland, the tragedy of Hungary, the embarrassment and hesitation of the Yugoslavian policy of Marshal Tito—all these are phenomena related both historically and psychologically, and which constitute the *peripeteia* of the same movement, which in the precise sense of the term must be called revolutionary.¹

The quasi-unanimity of the Polish and Hungarian people in their stubborn and desperate revolt; the resistance, prolonged beyond any politically predictable limit, which the Hungarians offered to overwhelming police and military forces; the complicity, whether active or passive, of numerous Russian soldiers who formed the garrison in Hungary—these various indications cry out that we are in the presence of a revolution. The hesitations, the very contradictions, the shifty and incoherent violence of Bolshevik policy bring their own confirmation of this, for it is a fact that all governments, however tyrannical and machiavellian, hesitate to repress a revolt when they perceive its popular and revolutionary vitality. The U.S.S.R. decided to drown Hungary in blood when the latter proclaimed, a little too quickly, its intentions of international neutrality. It is claimed that Red China had encouraged the Polish and Hungarian movements at the outset; if this is true, it would provide a new confirmation of our point of view.

The explanations and justifications given by Russia for its policy exude

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the wretched smell of coarse propaganda for the benefit of those who wish to be convinced at any cost, like the "officials" of the National Communist parties, or the primitive Mongolian soldiers who were used for the repression of the Hungarians. Its essential point was to paste alternate labels of "Fascist" or "anarchist" on those who revolted. The first is fantastically improbable. Strictly speaking, it is possible that some ex-Fascists (still it would be nice to know what is meant by this term) were able to emerge during the fighting; but it is not very likely that after ten years of a police regime and purges they could exercise any influence on the course of events. Unless, of course, it were to be admitted that these ex-Fascists took refuge in the ranks of the Communist party itself, and played the Stalinist game to perfection! As for the accusation of anarchism, all governments use it against every revolution when they are defending order—that order which formerly "prevailed at Warsaw" under the heel of Mouraviev, and which now reigns at Budapest after the passage of Russian tanks.

Once again, public opinion has understood. If the officials of the national Communist parties (and especially the French, perhaps the most Stalinist and most mediocre of all) repeated the Russian explanations, neither the intellectuals, always ready for discussion and rebellion, nor the mass of workers agreed to follow the party line. We have seen evidence of this in the total failure of the strike fomented by the Communist party, in internal dissensions in the C.G.T., and its recent defeats in professional elections, even opposition within Communist cells, especially in the Paris area. There is even more evidence in this direction in Italy, and especially in the Anglo-Saxon countries.

The U.S.S.R. as Defender of Conservatism

THOSE WHO OBSERVE objective reality, whether Marxists or not, see that the U.S.S.R., and even international communism as a whole, finds itself placed, through the events of Poland and Hungary, in a holding-on position, and in the sense that Guizot described, offering a "resistance" both defensive, conservative and imperialist. (We might almost say "colonialist," if the domination by the U.S.S.R. of the satellite countries of Central and Eastern Europe really corresponded to a colonial situation.)

Against a movement, against the will of the future and of progress, Russia in fact defends acquired positions. She defends her domination, by force, of European countries that have been practically annexed. This domination is camouflaged by a protective cloud of so-called national Communist parties, but we can measure how little the latter respond to national will when we see that these "people's democracies" have nothing "popular" in them but their names, and slogans that are both nationalist and pacifist. She defends, against the protests of nations which have been despoiled, the living standard of her subjects, which has been made possible by the scientifically conducted pillage of the satellite nations, a strategy masked under the pretext of economic cooperation. She defends a pseudo-federation against movements of national independence. This federation serves as a screen for Russian national imperialism, as well as a spiritual imperialism for a "secular religion" in which many of its pontiffs and augurs no longer seem to believe. Against the claims of human cooperation and of progressive (in the etymological sense of the word) transformations, she maintains an economic and

political system, whose real strength has been revealed during the past 30 years, but which has also betrayed its insufficiencies, its impotence and its inhumanity. She defends a police regime—symbolized by the A.V.O. (the "Gestapo," as the Hungarians called it)—against a desire for liberty. She defends cultural obscurantism and disciplining of the intellect against the aspirations of intellectuals for freedom of thought and expression. She defends an official philosophy, a vulgarized and overly-simplified Marxism—we get some idea of this in the way the great Marxist philosopher George Lukacs was treated—, both against the spiritual will to live of religions and against the independent thought of philosophers, including Marxists. To sum up, she is defending herself against a revolution.

Preambles of the Revolution

THIS SHIFT from the revolution to conservatism was foreseeable; in fact, one might almost say that it started with Stalinism, in which we may see the "Bonapartism" of the Russian revolution, if the comparison is not forced. It is the height of naïveté for *progressistes*—and particularly, the Christians among them—not to understand this evolution, and not to listen to the warning addressed to them by men like Victor Serge, Ignazio Silone, El Campesino, and Koestler—to mention only disillusioned Communists.

In any case, after the secession of Yugoslavia—one of the most important dates, along with the Communist victory in China, in the post-war period—doubt should no longer have been possible. The rebellion of Tito and his people—for once, practically unanimous—proved that in spite of its pretensions, Leninist-Stalinist Marxism had revealed itself incapable of reconciling nationalism and

internationalism in a new synthesis, incapable of assuring peace through respect for diversity and national autonomy.

The risk of de-Stalinization—for it is a risk—lies in its acceleration of history. On one hand, the leaders of the U.S.S.R. were unable to avoid de-Stalinization if they wanted to emerge from the nightmare which weighed on "the best years of their lives" and to pacify a population which, after the horrors of war and the atrocities of the purges, felt the normal need of breathing a little and enjoying a "socialist" regime, which, they were assured, was the best in the world. On the other hand, as Marshal Tito well saw, de-Stalinization placed in question more than one man and "the cult of personality"; it ultimately included the party which had produced this man and the government which the party had installed—to the exact degree in which it weakened a fundamental dogma of belief and of Communist propaganda, the infallibility of the Party, which was the conscience of the proletariat, and hence also of humanity, of the revolution, and of history in general. It is always dangerous to touch an idol, for as a result the sacrilege may even disturb the idolatry itself. What Tito has not understood—and probably cannot understand—is that over and above the "system," the ideology to which it is attached has also been placed in question, if not Marxism as such, which has become a chapter in the manuals of philosophy, at least Marxist-Leninism, of which after all Stalinism is only a derivation, even if it is also a deviation from it.

Even in Russia de-Stalinization has produced a psychological shock whose resonances have not yet concluded. The shock was naturally greater in the satellite countries, which unlike Russia could not identify Communism and patriotism.

On the contrary, they saw themselves in opposition to the U.S.S.R. because of their patriotism. De-Stalinization and the necessities of foreign policy seemed to imply that the Russian leaders had publicly given approval to Yugoslavia and its leader. The approbation given to Belgrade seemed a prelude to a later approbation of national independence for the other satellite countries. Moreover, the example of Yugoslavia, like the example of Finland previously, seemed to show that resistance to Communist Russia actually "paid off."

Was anything more needed to hurl Poland and Hungary on the road to revolt—a revolt that is a revolution? For, just as the events in those countries are something other than political uprisings or reactionary movements, they are also something more, despite the undeniable presence of revolt and despair, than revolt and despair in a pure state. They are the beginning of a world hope which we would like to call the Third Revolution.

A certificate of failure

LIKE EVERY REVOLUTION, these events first present a declaration of bankruptcy. They prove that Marxist Bolshevism has failed, that it did not keep its promises. Indeed, how could it, considering its mythic character? These events prove too that the Communist system has produced neither the ideas, the processes, nor the elites which would have permitted the consequences of the October 1917 revolution to be tempered and improved by a reformist evolution.

Communism promised the suppression of the proletariat and the solution of the worker problem. It has not only not abolished the proletariat condition, but has generalized it by agricultural collectivism and by an industrialization which was often too hasty and at the

price of slave labor. Not only has it not realized the promotion and liberation of the workers, but has deprived the workers of their principal means of defense, the free union. In countries of an old and complex economy, its totally planned economy has shown itself incapable of guaranteeing to the workers the standard of living they enjoyed before the war, which even then was very low compared with that of workers in western countries. Therefore it is not at all astonishing that the revolutionary movement was launched in the worker districts of Berlin, Poznam and Budapest, and that some of its most stubborn leaders were former Communist militants, who were all the more furious because they felt they had been duped, used as instruments for the elevation of an aristocracy of activists and bureaucrats whom the Poles called "Chevroletariat," because of their American cars. If at least these upstarts had shown themselves to be competent and efficient—but they weren't even that.

Communism had promised freedom and genuine democracy—always easy promises. It opposed its "real democracy" to the "formal democracy" of parliamentary governments. But the "real democracy" of the "people's" regimes wasn't even a formal one. The verbalism of its leaders concealed a double tyranny, that of a bungling bureaucracy, meddlesome and inefficient, and a police force that was too efficient.

Communism had promised peace through respect for national freedoms. In fact, the Russian peace presented itself as a more or less direct domination, and even as a Russification of the satellites.

Communism proclaimed the triumph of science and culture. In practice, culture was subservient to a simplist ideology, and science assumed the visage of

Comrade Popoff, the universal inventor. It was not astonishing, therefore, that in countries of ancient culture the intellectuals, beginning with many who had briefly been influenced by the prestige of Marxism, had reacted violently and played the role we know of during the Hungarian uprising.

In the beginning of the popular democracies, between 1945 and 1948, Communism had extended a velvet paw to religion. Later it revealed its real purposes, its proselytizing and persecuting atheism, ending with a kind of neo-Josephite materialism, jailing bishops, priests and laymen who were faithful to Rome, using priests and ministers who would cooperate with a "national" or "popular" Christianity to divide Catholicism and Protestantism.

Communism called itself the "Youth of the World." For ten years it put all its care in indoctrinating youth. It was a vain effort. In Hungary and Poland, the youth were at the vanguard of the Third Revolution, using against Communism the arms which it had been taught to employ, greeting the Russian tanks with "Molotov cocktails"—whose name indicates its origin.

It is also of the highest interest that the Third Revolution had its development in Hungary and Poland, two countries where the tradition of Catholic Christianity was rejoined with an ancient revolutionary and national tradition of Kosciuszko and Kossuth, as well as a working-class and socialist movement. It was essentially the configuration of these three forces which prompted the revolution. By experiencing this failure, Leninist-Stalinist Communism showed itself (which should already have been suspected) although capable of rapidly equipping, at the maximum human cost, under-industrialized and under-developed countries with

the help of a dictatorship and total planning—in capable of administering, either efficiently or humanly, countries of an ancient and complex economy in which the tradition of a working-class movement persists.

Beyond the Present

BUT THE THIRD REVOLUTION goes beyond a mere certificate of failure, which would lead to counter-revolution, if not reaction, at least to "restorations." The movement is revolutionary in that it aims, beyond the present situation, at a future envisaged as beginning with precisely this situation. We can measure the error of Sartre when he speaks, in rather naïve surprise, of "a rightist revolution," and we are astonished that such a critical philosopher could interpret contemporary reality with the help of such gross and spatial notions as "right" and "left," borrowed from the outmoded habits of minor-league French politics.

To the degree to which, in such a traditional scheme, the right represents an instinct to hold on, and conservatism, while the left suggests movement and becoming, the Third Revolution is "leftist," if one insists on such a classification. Neither in Poland nor Hungary has there been a question of undoing the "conquests" of socialism, the industrial nationalizations or the agrarian reforms, for example, or returning to a status that existed prior to the Communist revolution. Cardinal Wysinski and Cardinal Mindszenty have, moreover, spoken with equal clarity on the subject of ecclesiastical property. What I know of the Catholics of East Germany supports this point of view: despite their struggle for freedom, they have no taste for the resurrection of a capitalism of which West Germany offers them, moreover, a prosperous example. Indeed, its very pros-

perity repels them, since they see it linked with an excess of comfort, a softness and moral laxity, from which unfortunately neither Western Europe nor the United States has remained unscathed. Once they have been realized, certain structures have not been challenged; what has been questioned has been something quite different—a something beyond these structures which the U.S.S.R., imprisoned in its "system" refuses to accept or even conceive of. Surely we should take notice of a reaction against collectivization of farming, whose inefficiency and stupidity has again been demonstrated. But even in the U.S.S.R., because of its very existence and essence, agriculture has presented Bolshevism with a problem against which it has consistently broken its nose. In the domain of industry, the revolutionaries did not demand the end of nationalization; on the contrary, they asked for a genuine socialization of the enterprises that had been nationalized, protesting against technocrats and bureaucrats.

It is necessary, on these points, to dispel all misunderstanding. The anti-Communism of the Third Revolution, although not simply anti-Russian or anti-Stalinist, has not much in common with the anti-Communism of either our conservatives or our liberals. It does not propose to defend capitalism, even one that has been reformed and modernized, nor the existing social hierarchies, nor parliamentary democracy, nor even a certain historical form of civilization (although it is defending permanent values that are enrooted in western civilization). It has perhaps even less in common with the anti-Communism of the United States and the ideal of "free enterprise." It is infinitely more radical, more metaphysical—even among those who, out of habit and despite their anti-

Socialism, continue to call themselves Communists. It defends a conception of man against a materialistic totalitarianism; it intends that this conception of man should orient the future in a world which would not reject certain acquisitions of Communism, when purified and re-directed by a rupture with the "system" and the ideology.

Ultimately what were the insurgents demanding? Three fundamental liberties: individual freedom, the guarantee of the rights of man and of citizenship in opposition to police dictatorship and propaganda; professional freedom through the active participation of workers in the direction of economic affairs in opposition to bureaucracy and technocracy; a minimum of national freedom in opposition to Russian domination. The reasonable character of these three requirements—of which the second is very close to that of labor in the capitalist world—ought not to conceal its profoundly revolutionary direction in the face of a dictatorship that was bureaucratic, imperialistic and conservative.

Three Series of Revolutions

THAT IS WHY we speak of a *third* revolution; the use of this ordinal number as adjective seems historically well grounded.

When the historian contemplates the course of human destiny since the classical ages, following the disorders of the end of the Middle Ages and those revolutionary upheavals which were the Renaissance and the Reformation, he sees two revolutions at work—or rather two chains of related revolutions, two revolutionary constellations.

The first begins with the bourgeois and Puritan revolution in England, and attains its climax with the French Revolution, and ends with the apparent triumph of the Anglo-Saxon type of

democracy after World War I, which seemed to have swept away the last tottering monarchies. Perhaps we should consider the Turkish revolution of Mustapha-Kemal as the last of these waves—although in some ways it introduces the second and opposed current. This first revolutionary wave reached England, the United States (whose war for independence was revolutionary), and France in turn—and after her, all of Europe, Latin America with Bolivar and San Martin, the China of Sun Yat-Sen, and the Turkey of Mustapha-Kemal.

These revolutions were essentially liberal, which does not mean, however, that they were accomplished in sweetness and without abuses of authority. But almost everywhere dictatorial phases were succeeded, at least in outline, by liberal and democratic phases, whose arrival showed the primary meaning of the movement. Coinciding with the sudden acceleration of the industrial revolution which occurred in the second half of the 19th century, with a rapid progress in the means of transport and communication and the climax of a "written" civilization, they corresponded to a need for freedom, for lots of elbow-room, for the renewal that humanity felt both in the growth of a revived economy and in the exploitation of a world filled with appetizing possibilities.

Hence liberals expressed themselves on the political level through parliamentary democracy, and on the economic level by industrial capitalism of small and medium-sized units. On the social plane we see the arrival of the middle class to a position of domination, the summit of its historical career; from a cultural perspective, we see the emphasis on freedom of thought and expression. Morally, the accent is on individualism; from an international point of view we see a curious mixture of doctrinal inter-

nationalism and nationalism; in religion, there is a development of anti-clericalism, virulent or moderate depending on the individual country. These liberal revolutions resulted in an economic enrichment and an increase of population of which we are the heirs. In spite of doctrinal errors and practical abuses, they certainly contributed to authentic human progress, especially in the emphasis on the sense of personal freedom, the guarantee of the individual man against the illegal or the arbitrary, the desire for a democratic participation of the citizen in the elaboration of collective destinies. They survive today, perhaps more in their ideology than their structures, in western Europe and the United States.

But out of the lacunas, errors, abuses, and the very contradictions of the liberal revolution arose the second series of revolutions, those that in *The Coming of Prometheus* I called the revolutions of the 20th century, and whose true nature was first described by James Burnham in *The Managerial Revolution*, although in too systematic a way, overly influenced by the schemas of Marxist thought.

The initiator of this movement was the Russian revolution of 1917, the first result of a long process of thought and action that had begun in 1830. The National Socialism of Hitler must also be classed among the revolutions of the 20th century, and to a lesser degree, Italian Fascism, which was eclipsed as soon as Nazism, its ally and rival, appeared. The two parallel series of revolutions have given birth to satellite revolutions in Europe, Asia, and Latin America. To a Marxist it will surely seem sacrilegious to place, not on the same level, but even in parallel lines "Communist revolution" and "Fascist reaction." But the fact that Bolshevik Marxists did not suc-

ceed in foreseeing, preventing or explaining the phenomena of Hitler and Mussolini in a satisfactory way proves that on this point, as on others, the abstractions of Marxism do not fit in with reality, notably in that they underestimate the importance of the middle class and the peasantry.

We might consider as related to the revolutions of the 20th century, although retaining a great deal from the preceding revolution, "the silent revolution" of the British Labor movement, Scandinavian socialism, with its cooperative and corporative aspects, the communitarian achievements of Israel, and the reforms, nationalizations, social security provisions realized in France during the revolutionary climate just after the Liberation. However, if differences should not hide resemblances, the opposite excess is just as dangerous.

Although they often adorn themselves with liberal terminology and ideology, the revolutions of the 20th century, judging them by their structures, are revolutions of authority and organization, confronting the disorder of liberal or monopoly capitalism. On the political level, this involves the destruction of parliamentary democracy and the installation of authoritarian or totalitarian governments; on the economic level, private capital is destroyed or domesticated, and a State capitalism is instituted, with an economy at least centralized, organized, partially or totally planned; on the social level the aristocracy and the traditional bourgeoisie are evicted and representatives of new groupings emerge from the lower middle and working class. Culturally, there is an official propaganda and a State orthodoxy, in which nationalism, scientism and irrational elements are intertwined. Morally, these 20th century revolutions are marked by collectivism; from the per-

spective of internationalism, they have an ambiguity like the liberal revolutions, with both nationalist and internationalist aspects. As for religion, they are marked by an anti-religious bias, even to the point of materialism and doctrinaire atheism. All in all, they are managerial revolutions, socialist (if we give that word a vague and affective meaning), mass movements, predominantly worker or middle class depending on time and place, authoritarian, and theoretically egalitarian, although in practice they result in as glaring inequalities as those of preceding periods. Whereas the myths of the liberal revolution formed the basis of individualism and freedom, the myths of the 20th century revolution centered about ideas of order, efficiency, collective power and social justice. Today, after the fall of German National Socialism and of Fascism, Russian Bolshevism is its representative; it probably never better incarnated this revolutionary wave than in its Stalinist avatar.

The revolutions of the 20th century corresponded to real needs: the need of organization and order in a capitalist regime that had become almost totally anarchic, as the world crisis of 1929 demonstrated; the need of rationalizing a contradictory world, paradoxical and unpredictable; the need of justice and better conditions felt by certain social categories that had been oppressed: workers, the middle class, certain parts of the peasantry, certain types of technicians. To a certain degree and at a terrible price, they have begun to satisfy some of these needs. They have implanted certain structures which would be difficult, if not impossible, to undo.

In their turn, by their errors, their excesses, and their interior contradictions, they have created a new revolu-

tionary situation, resolved for some by military defeat, but from which the U.S.S.R. has not wished to, and ultimately cannot emerge by means of flexible reforms. The revolutionary situation gives birth to the Third Revolution.

The latter presents itself both as a revolution of freedom in its opposition to authoritarianism and totalitarianism and as a popular and mass revolution, in which workers and intellectuals are in the vanguard; as always, the peasants are being led; as for the bourgeoisie, there no longer is one—and for a good reason—but what has replaced it, the privileged categories of the new regimes are generally in opposition to the revolution. We can then legitimately look on it as the historic consequence, in a new version, of the working class movement begun in Europe in 1830.

If we keep in mind the inventory made above of the Polish and Hungarian aspirations, it would seem that the purpose of the Third Revolution is to reconcile, in a new synthesis, the achievements of the first two revolutions. Isn't this shown in the term "liberal Socialism," in its very awkwardness and apparent contradiction, which was used in both Poland and Hungary? Let us say it clearly: such a reconciliation will not be easy; it implies the novelty of a synthesis, i.e. an ideology and new techniques. The Third Revolution has not yet taken place. It is still in the desire stage, which is what makes for its weakness against the conservatism of the U.S.S.R.

In this regard, we cannot overlook the coincidence of the aspirations of the Third Revolution and the great movement of research, thought and action that is called "Human Relations," and on which our friend Michael Fogarty has prepared a penetrating little pamphlet, published by the Catholic Social

Guild of Oxford. Emerging prosaically and pragmatically from "industrial relations" and "public relations" as they have been practiced, because of the pressure of the facts, by American industries, this movement of human relations takes on an unforeseen range and depth; its researches have led it to verify the growing dehumanization of human relations in a soulless world and to seek a remedy for it, in this way placing on trial, not only our economic system and administration, but contemporary civilization itself. Perhaps these findings will ultimately give the Third Revolution some of its immediate ends and some of its methods.

The Third Revolution and Under-developed Countries

THIS HASTY REFERENCE to the human relations movement shows that the Third Revolution goes beyond the borders of the Soviet empire. It is even pursued in the countries which remain subjects of the first revolution, and which, if they ultimately accomplish the third, will surely be able to avoid the second.

The revolution is particularly in search of itself in the colonial or ex-colonial countries which remain under-developed. Understand me well; I don't want to fall into the easy and contemptible game of alibi, which let Messrs. B. and K., after the Hungarian revolt, "wash their hands in the Suez canal." Some use Algeria as an alibi for Budapest, others use Budapest as an excuse for Algeria; the most cunning of all provide themselves with a double alibi, allowing themselves to demonstrate their own superiority by opposing eastern and western colonialism. When such actions are not official lies, they show a political childishness. Resemblances and sim-

ple analogies should not be confused with identities.

But every honest and lucid observer ought to recognize the relationship of the Polish-Hungarian movement with that which brings formerly colonial peoples to demand both respect for the person, economic equality, and national independence—i.e. the end of those situations of inequality which colonialism, semi-colonialism, and their sequels brought with them. You may think what you please of Nasser's policy, but nevertheless in Egypt millions of *fellahin* are dying of hunger along the Nile corridor. Whether you believe in Algerian nationalism or not, whatever your recommendations to resolve this conflict, if I may be allowed a somewhat arbitrary over-simplification, we may describe it above all as a struggle between people who have 20,000 francs a year against those who have 20,000 a month; the most learned commentaries and most subtle political maneuvers will never bury this brutal bit of statistics. In this light the Bandung conference appears as a phenomenon of the Third Revolution—an immense protest of hungry peoples against those who are comfortable.

Let us not be surprised if these claims sometimes contain excesses, naïveté, or displays of impatience, or that they get mixed up with false sentiments and resentments, xenophobia, archaic nationalism, even racism. Unfortunately, it is normal that such incoherences and contradictions should occur; they are the consequences of a too hasty evolution which colonialism has produced. Just as the aeroplane opens up countries which never knew railroads or wagon routes, and an audio-visual civilization reaches people who have never gone through a stage of civilization dominated by an ideal of literacy, the Third Revolution has begun in countries which have

scarcely been touched by the first two revolutions, by democracy and capitalism, by planning and socialism. As Toynbee would say, the problem here would be to achieve the Third Revolution without passing through the first two; unfortunately, this is a lot harder than simply importing aeroplanes and radios. At the same time that they are seeking the Third Revolution, the under-developed peoples are also looking for the first and second. This is the source of their ideological contradictions, their nationalism which seems to us outmoded, and such political incoherence as is suggested by the co-existence in India of planned industry and primitive agriculture.

We know the use Russia makes of this ambiguity. Her planned economy is offered as the most efficient tool for the realization, on the economic level, of the second revolution. In under-developed countries, she encourages resentful nationalism, while waiting for the day when she will be able to muzzle them. She has succeeded in making Mao-Tse-Tung's China enter her orbit—an operation which will bring its own dangers. In spite of the trumps that it holds, the U.S.S.R. meets with a sort of instinctive resistance in under-developed countries. The leaders and even the masses are suspicious of it. In India the action of Vinhave Bhavé, which continues that of Gandhi, is the opposite extreme of Communism. Nasser carries on a dangerous flirtation with Moscow, but puts his native Communists in jail. In North Africa, the Tunisia of Bourguiba, the Morocco of Si Bekkai, and the Algerian leaders remain reticent in regard to Communism. Among the Negroes, the rejection of the party by the American Richard Wright and the West Indian poetess Aimé Césaire represent widespread disaffection. One discovers in In-

dia and among the Moslem nations the desire to establish a "third force" between the United States and the U.S.S.R. Doesn't this desire for a third force fit in with a half-consciousness of the Third Revolution?

In Search of an Ideology

WE HAVE ALREADY pointed out that the Third Revolution does not yet have an ideology. Regrettably enough, the movements of the under-developed countries still make use of the shreds of ideology and myth that they have borrowed from the preceding European revolutions. When leaders like Nasser try their hands at ideological constructions, the results are disappointing. China might have had her own ideology, in the line of Sun Yat-Sen; she has preferred Marxist-Leninism, a choice for which she has not yet finished paying. Hungary and Poland do not yet have great ideas, but only sentiments and aspirations.

The revolutionary movement is occurring at a time when none of the preceding ideologies can furnish it with the conceptual tool it needs. The ideologies of the first revolution—liberalism, individualism, parliamentary democracy—have run their course, and attempts at a neo-liberalism have made little headway with the masses. As for the American way of life, which principally flows from it, it is not an ideology but an ensemble of attitudes of a strictly national character. Revolutionary Marxism, in its Russian form, has been such a failure that it has produced the Third Revolution; in its Titoist form, it seems an illegitimate, and in any case, localized, compromise—the proof of this is Tito's hesitations during the Hungarian uprising. Reformist socialism, from an ideological point of view, seems at the end of its rope; who would think

of asking for ideological guidance from Mollet or Nenni, or even from such intelligent socialists as Spaak, Jules Moch, or Bevan? Is there anything left in socialism today but a souvenir of a past and a great word whose resonances have not finished vibrating in the conscience of the masses?

Ultimately, liberalism and socialism, individualism and collectivism, all 19th century doctrines, are used up, and our vision of the world will find itself renewed by progress in human sciences, especially depth psychology, which the great Christian psychoanalyst Karl Stern called *The Third Revolution* (Harcourt Brace, 1955). The world of 1957 differs so radically from the one in which Adam Smith, Proudhon and Karl Marx did their thinking, that there seems to remain only one resource—personalism, and particularly, the most logical and living of all, Christian personalism. Doesn't the movement of the Third Revolution and that of human relations, explicitly or implicitly, draw its inspiration from personalism? Certainly, personalism is more a tendency, an attitude of mind rather than an ideology. But an ideology in accord with particular transitory needs could be grafted onto the principles and attitudes of personalism.

Here we see the opportunity the Third Revolution offers to Christians. The first two revolutions were accomplished, most often, either without them or even against them, often in the name of anti-Christian or anti-religious ideologies, which could only repel them. The Third Revolution, in Poland and Hungary, took place with their participation. They were prepared for it by a century of reflection, with its contribution of Catholic social thought, Catholic Action, and in a lesser degree—because overly contaminated by the ideology of

the first revolution—Christian Democracy. To assure the liberty of peoples in a juridical order, the active participation of workers in the management of economic affairs, the just autonomy of nations in an international organization; to find a "way," beyond capitalism and socialism—for which Christians conscious of their time and informed in their faith have long dreamed: in these aims there is nothing which the demands of Christianity oppose. Only those will protest who confuse Christianity with one or the other of the previous revolutions, or even with a period preceding the modern revolutions. But in fact, on each of the points of the program that we have announced, we could give references not only to passages of Christian writers, but even to papal texts.

It also seems that an important role might be played in the Third Revolution by ex-Communists, if they have not become—in too human a reaction—pure anti-Communists, and when they have unburdened themselves of Leninism and even of Marxism. By the experience of their deception, they discovered the limits, the contradictions and the inhumanities of Communism, and the weaknesses of Marxism. Better than others, they are apt to seek for something beyond that which disillusioned them. One of them, the great writer Ignazio Silone, whose work is a moving testimony of Christian nostalgia, has written that the final conquerors of Communism will be the former Communists. There is something more than a paradox here, as Hungary's heroic dead have proven.

Hopes and Fears

SOME MAY FIND a taste of consolation in our analysis. This is unfortunate. We do not want to reassure anyone, but rather to awaken people both to hopes and dangers.

Revolutions do not come along with the regularity of subway cars. Like the others, the Third Revolution has nothing pre-determined or inevitable about it. It can be wiped out by Communist or capitalist reactions. It can grow rotten in stagnation. It can be contaminated by lying ideologies—and we are especially distrustful of the germs of death which a certain humanistic existentialism might inject into it, whose representatives, after the crudest errors, have made a brilliant about-face. The Third Revolution will only come into being with the arms and hearts of men.

It can happen that it will be utilized by one of the previous revolutions against the other, that its European aspects will serve as cover against its extra-European aspects, and vice versa.

It may happen that the sudden turns of its development might bring on a world war. In such a case, in all probability, all three revolutions will perish in the chaos. There are times when despair pays, there are others when it makes you lose everything by playing double or nothing.

All that exists now is a gleam of light under the door that the future opens to us. The revolts of Poland and especially that of Hungary represent, by analogy, what the uprisings of the silk-weavers of Lyons in 1831 and 1834 were for the second revolution. But hope gleams forth, light filters through a crack. From now on it has been proven that a totalitarian regime, with its army, police and propaganda cannot subdue men forever, or tear out of their hearts the love of liberty. It has been proven that the second revolution is not the last.

Translated by JOSEPH E. CUNNEEN

¹ Cf. Joseph Folliet, "De la revolution comme mythe et comme realité," lecture at the Semaine Sociale de Marseille, *Les exigences humaines et l'expansion economique* (Lyon Chronique Sociale de France, 1956).

THE VALIDITY AND LIMITATION OF THE POLITICAL PRINCIPLE

MARTIN BUBER

IT IS CHARACTERISTIC of the great, imperishable sayings of religious teaching that they are bound to situations. Their place is never beyond human intercourse. They arise as spoken response to some occasion. A group is assembled, whether one that had previously joined the speaker or one that has gathered around him at the moment. To the members of that group the word is directed, perhaps to summon them in a given situation or to answer a question raised just then in connection with a situation. Demanding or demanded, the message of the particular man is addressed to their special circumstances; it concerns itself with the present moment and aims to affect it.

But once this word has spread abroad and has entered thereby into the memory and tradition of other generations, each generation fashions out of that word the counsel and encouragement, the exhortation and comfort it has need of in the new conditions of its existence. The original saying proves to be able to bestow manifold gifts far beyond its initial intention, gifts for manifold situations in historical and personal life; indeed, we may even say it contains

these gifts. Such a message is directed to a particular group, but it is also directed to the human world—not to a vague and universal world, but to the concrete, the actual, historically-burdened and historically-inflamed world. The interpretation will be true to the saying only when it unites to its intention at the hour in which it was spoken the intention unfolded throughout all the hours of its working and, in a special way, the intention of this hour when the interpretation is made. History not only expands, it also deepens the significance of the saying, for what is successively derived from it penetrates further into its ground.

Jesus' saying concerning the tribute money, on the basis of which I shall proceed in order to discuss the value and limitation of the political principle as it concerns our historical hour, is a message of this kind. Interpreters of this saying have repeatedly and rightly pointed out that Jesus deduced from the image of Caesar on the coin the duty not to refuse tax to the earthly ruler. On the other hand, it seems to me an error to understand the duty, as has been done, as lying in the fact that the payment has been described as a restitution. Neither a financial expert nor a normal human being conceives the money that he inherits or earns to be a gift of the state out of its treasury. The relation of the state that coins money to the economic society that employs money, at whose disposal the state places the medium of exchange, is, in fact, a wholly different one. And what is far more important: the giving to God that is enjoined in the latter part of the say-

This article of Professor Buber dates from 1953 and will be included in a volume of collected essays, POINTING THE WAY (translated and edited by Maurice S. Friedman), which Harper's will publish this Fall. CROSS CURRENTS has already published two other essays of the world-renowned author of I AND THOU: "The Education of Character" (Winter 1951), and "Genuine Conversation and the Possibilities for Peace" (Fall 1955).

ing can only by a strained interpretation be explained as a giving back; indeed this construction would warp the meaning of the saying. The only legitimate interpretation, as has been maintained in this connection,* is one that follows the clue of the sense of the Greek word: "to render what one has to give in the fulfillment of a duty or expectation."

But there already begins that necessary striving I have spoken of: to draw close to the original ground of the message that no longer pertains to one time but to all times. What, we ask, does it mean that time after time man can and should give something to God, as time after time he can and should give something to the earthly power ruling over him; and further what does it mean that the subject of that gift is designated as "what is God's"—or, in the translation closer to the original (which is to be assumed when translating the Greek text into Aramaic), "that which belongs to God" or "is due" Him, on the same plane with that which belongs to or is due Caesar. That one should "give," that one is obliged to render to Caesar, the superior power, the state, what the state legitimately demands of its citizens, namely, what is due to the state on the ground of the reciprocal relationship of reciprocal, limited claim, is clear enough. But how can that which he is obliged to give to God be placed on the same level? Is the reciprocal relationship between God and man which each human creature enters into by his existence also one of a reciprocal, limited claim? Does man, then, have any claim at all on God? When he actually turns to God, that is, when he prays in truth and reality, he can hardly persist in a claim for a moment. But if God

has a claim on man, how can it be limited? If one begins to measure from the side of Caesar what a man has to "give," shall the remainder, or the actual part of the remainder, fall to the share of God? In this wise it has clearly been understood by those who have explained the saying as meaning that one ought to comply with the worldly power so long as it demands nothing that stands in contradiction to the reverence due God in the form of creed and service, hence nothing such as sacrificing to the Roman emperor as godlike being. But thereby the sphere of the divine, the sphere of the life of man pledged to God, is inevitably reduced to cult and confession. In other words, instead of being the Lord of existence, God is made into the God of religion.

If, on the other hand, we begin measuring with God and try first, without regard for other claims, to ascertain what is due God without reserve, then we encounter in the depths of man's experience of himself a dark but elemental knowledge that man owes himself, the totality of his existence, to God. From this primal knowledge the central act of the cult, the sacrifice, apparently derives: man understands his offering as a symbolic substitute permitted him in place of himself. Thus the body of the sacrificial animal (as we find again and again, from a Phoenician formula to one of Indian Islam) represents his own body. Later we encounter in the language of that revelation in whose tradition Jesus grew up and to which he fundamentally referred himself, the awesome command he himself cited as the first of all: man shall love God "with all his might." If one takes the primacy of this commandment as seriously as Jesus took it, then one must exclude at the outset the acknowledgment of any special sphere to which one has to "give"

* Buchsel in Kittel's *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, II, 170.

anything at all in independence of his relationship with God.

Unless we seek to allay the disquietude aroused in us by the saying about the tribute money through summarily relegating it, as some theologians have done, to the "enigmatic sayings," we are obliged to abandon the current interpretation according to which the statement is concerned with a division between different provinces of the same sphere. Building upon the experiences of all the generations that have encountered the sayings of Jesus in their hours of historical decision, and also on the dearly purchased self-understanding of our own generation, we must turn to another explanation. I can indicate it in modern terms alone, since, as far as I know, this explanation has not been previously dealt with. But its basic, non-conceptual content must be numbered among the presuppositions that, though unexpressed, need no expression since every central figure has them in common with the inner circle of his hearers.

The human person, ontologically regarded, constitutes not a single sphere, but a union of two spheres. By this I in no way imply the duality of body and soul, allotting to one the kingdom of Caesar and to the other the kingdom of God; such a dualism would be in clear conflict with the teaching of Jesus. Rather, proceeding from the word of Deuteronomy, "with all thy soul and with all thy might," I mean the sphere of wholeness and that of separation or division. When, and in so far as, man becomes whole, he becomes God's and gives to God; he gives to God just this wholeness. The realization of wholeness afforded man in any earthly matter is ultimately, and beyond any name that one can give it, connected with this. His human life, imprinted with mortality, cannot run its course in wholeness; it is

bound to separation, to division. But he may and should elicit from the former direction for the latter. What is legitimately done in the sphere of separation receives its legitimacy from the sphere of wholeness. In the sermon of Deuteronomy the commandment to love is followed soon after by a noteworthy dual statement. First it is said that God loves the stranger who is a guest among you, and then it bids, "You shall love the stranger." Our duty to love the stranger in the sphere of separation follows, if we love God in the sphere of wholeness, from God's love for him, the exposed man.

Thus giving to the state, giving that which is due it in the sphere of separation, is authorized by the sphere of wholeness in which we give to God what is due Him: ourselves. The same insight can be phrased in other categories: those of the direct and the indirect relationship. The being directed to God in his wholeness stands in direct relation to Him; all direct relationship can receive measure and direction only from there. Give to God your immediacy, the saying about tribute money says to us, and from so doing you will learn ever anew what of your mediacy you shall give to Caesar.

Since the time when certain opponents of Jesus—called "the Pharisees" by the Evangelists, in starkly oversimplified fashion—asked him whether the Judaic man is obliged by God to pay taxes or may exercise passive resistance, generations of world history have met the saying of Jesus with questions born of their particular situations, and these situations have become ever more difficult and contradictory. The question now is not one of foreign rule, but of one's own; not one of a government sustained by force but of a government whose

legitimacy is willingly acknowledged. The question does not pertain to acts governed by law; it no longer merely concerns carrying out what is ordered. The question in increasing measure is one of man himself. It is not, however, the state in its empirical manifestation that first raised the claim that has put man in question. It is rather the political thinker who elevated the state above the multiplicity of its empirical forms of manifestation into the absolute.

The decisive stretch of this way leads from Hobbes, the hostile son of the English Revolution, to Hegel, the hostile son of the French. Hobbes, to be sure, subjects the interpretation of the word of God to the civil power, but he holds fast to the unconditional superiority of the God who transcends it. Thus there can still persist here, even if in only a secondary and dependent fashion *de facto*, what is God's. For Hegel, who sees in the fact "that the state is" the "walking of God in the world" in which the idea, as the "real God," "consciously realizes" itself, for Hegel, who understands the national spirit as "the divine that knows and wills itself," there is no longer anything that can be distinguished from what is Caesar's. If man has "his being only therein" in what he owes the state, if he has "his entire value" "only through the state," then logically he himself is the tribute he owes to "Caesar." In place of the empirical state, which was not or was not yet able to raise this claim (in its totalitarian form, of course, the state has already since then come quite close to it), it has been raised in the still-unconcluded age of Hegel by the political principle. This principle no longer confronts the individual and places a demand on him, like its predecessor; it permeates his soul and conquers his will.

By "the political principle" I designate that so-to-speak practical axiom that predominates in the opinion and attitude of a very great part of the modern world. Formulated in a sentence, it means roughly that public regimes are the legitimate determinants of human existence. Chief emphasis lies naturally on the adjective "legitimate." The principle does not simply take cognizance of the fact that in the era of the so-called world wars the fate of those involved therein is elementarily and ever-increasingly dependent upon what happens between the states, or more concretely, between their representatives. It aims rather to establish that this is rightfully the case, since the political environment constitutes the essential condition of man and it does not exist for his sake but he for it. Man, accordingly, is essentially Caesar's. So far as this practical axiom prevails, the saying concerning the tribute money is virtually nullified. Whether the remainder that is left after the abstraction of the essential can still be booked to the account of "God"—where this word has largely either been stricken from the current vocabulary or employed only metaphorically or conventionally—is hardly of importance.

In a human world so constituted, to discuss the value and limitation of the political principle in the spirit of the saying about tribute money means to criticize at the decisive point the would-be *absoluta*, the archons of the hour.

It is not the case, indeed, that in our age the absolute character of any kind of being, is simply contested. The relativizing of the highest values that marks this age has halted before the political principle. More than that, within the practical pragmatism that is the basic form of this relativizing, the initial individualistic phase, in which the ethical, noetic, and religious values are test-

ed by their utility for the life of the individual and are only sanctioned according to this utility, is succeeded by a second, collectivistic phase. Here truth is no longer understood and dealt with as what is advantageous to me, but to "us." This "we" is ostensibly that of the collectivity, perhaps of the "people"; in fact, however, it is the advantage of those who are currently ruling. In the interests of the maintenance and expansion of their power, these rulers seek in manifold ways to preserve in the people a belief in the existence of a truth which they themselves no longer share. The individualistic doctrine of relativism which we perceive in its most grandiose form in Stirner and Nietzsche, is supplanted—in an order the reverse of the sequence in the history of the sophists—partly by the collectivistic relativism of Marxism, partly by the various corruptions of existentialism, which are in some points singularly close to Marxism. Among these the German species of existentialism, an ontological affirmation of history, appears to me especially significant. I can touch here only on what directly concerns our problems, in which connection may I note that not only Marx but also Heidegger descends essentially from Hegel.

Marx's so-called "inversion" of the Hegelian world image is at the same time a reduction, since, following the great Vico, of all that exists, in nature and spirit, he allots to our knowledge only that in whose occurrence we men have historically participated; he combines with this reduction a still more intensive historicization of being than is found in Hegel. Apparently the historical economic process alone is accorded absoluteness—although, of course, only a historically existent one—and the state belongs only to its "super-structure" and as such is relativized. But since the political order appears here as the bearer of

the future change of all things and the highly centralized political concentration of power as the indispensable preparation for it, the unlimited state is postulated as the unconditional determining force until, according to the eschatological myth of the withering away of the state, the miraculous leap from the realm of necessity to that of freedom can be made.

The existentialism of Heidegger is also rooted in Hegel's thought, but in a deeper, indeed the deepest possible level. For Hegel world history is the absolute process in which the spirit attains to consciousness of itself; so for Heidegger historical existence is the illumination of being itself; in neither is there room for a superhistorical reality that sees history and judges it. For both philosophers the historical allows itself to be sanctioned in the last resort by its own thought concerning the history; here as there, accordingly, reflection on man's boldest concept, that of eternity set in judgment above the whole course of history and thereby above each historical age, is not admitted. Time is not embraced by the timeless, and the ages do not shudder before One who does not dwell in time but only appears in it. The knowledge has vanished that time can in no wise be conceived as a finally existing reality, independent and self-contained, and that absurdity lies in wait for every attempt to reflect on it in this way, no matter whether time be contemplated as finite or as infinite. If historical time and history are absolutized, it can easily occur that in the midst of present historical events the time-bound thinker ascribes to the state's current drive to power the character of an absolute and in this sense the determination of the future. After that, the goblin called success, convulsively grinning, may occupy for awhile the divine seat of authority.

But how does it happen at all that the state can everywhere be absolutized when it exists in fact only in the plural, as "the states," each of them being continually reminded of its relativity through the existence of the others?

Hegel could conceive of the state as absolute precisely because history for him was absolute and the state that had become representative in any historical epoch signified, in his mind, the current actuality of the being of the state. In Heidegger one may still read something of the same notion between the lines. But in the concreteness of lived life, a strange singularizing has been accomplished here; it would call to mind the myths of primitive tribes in which the creation of the world is related as the creation of the tiny territory of the tribe, were these myths not concerned with something essentially different from the state, with something, in distinction to it, corporeal and pregnant with mystery, the fatherland. Hegel has not noticed this vast difference; thus he can write, "While the state, the fatherland, makes up the community of existence..." Jacob Grimm has come closer to perceiving the true nature of the matter.

On the other hand, all relative valuation of the state rests for the most part just on the fact of plurality, since the defense against the outside world generally asserts itself far more emphatically than a defense against inside perils. Enemy communities are, in general, far more clearly discernible than hostile elements within. The state, of course, only reluctantly leaves the measure of its value to be determined within the limits of actual differences of interest; not infrequently it fosters a perspective which allows differences of interest to appear as radical opposition. The accumulated power of mastery thrives on drawing

profit from a—so to speak—latent exceptional condition. Vast sectors of the economy are inclined, understandably, to help perpetuate this tendency. Thus in times like ours the cold war tends to become the normal historical condition. Already at the beginning of our historical period we saw teachers of the law appear who, obedient to this trait of the times, defined the concept of the political so that everything disposed itself within it according to the criterion "friend-enemy," in which the concept of enemy includes "the possibility of physical killing." The practice of states has conveniently followed their advice. Many states decree the division of mankind into friends who deserve to live and enemies who deserve to die, and the political principle sees to it that what is decreed penetrates the hearts and reins of men.

Note carefully that I do not speak of the conduct of war itself where personal decisions are, to some extent, taken away beforehand and in the abyss of events killing becomes kindred with being killed. I refer only to that realm of life in which free decision becomes unexpectedly unfree.

The clearest example of this condition is furnished by that certainly most remarkable structure within the public organization that we call the party. Among the members of the political party are people of the most scrupulous integrity in their private lives. Yet when their party has specified who the (in this case internal) "enemy" is, these same people will day after day, with peaceful and untroubled conscience, lie, slander, betray, steal, torment, torture, murder. In the factories of party doctrine good conscience is being dependably fashioned and refashioned.

I have no warrant whatever to declare that under all circumstances the

interest of the group is to be sacrificed to the moral demand, more particularly as the cruel conflicts of duties and their unreserved decision on the basis of the situation seem to me to belong to the essential existence of a genuine personal ethos. But the evident absence of this inner conflict, the lack of its wounds and scars, is to me uncanny. I am not undertaking to set material limits to the validity of the political principle. That, rather, is just what must take place in reality time after time, soul after soul, situation after situation: I mean only to say that this occurrence has obviously become an exceptional one.

That one cannot serve God and Mammon is an entirely true saying, for Mammon embraces the soul and leaves nothing of it free. On the other hand, I believe that it is possible to serve God and the group to which one belongs if one is courageously intent on serving God in the sphere of the group, as much as one can. As much as one can at the time; "*quantum satis*" means in the language of lived truth not "either-or," but "as-much-as-one can." If the political organization of existence does not infringe on my wholeness and immediacy, it may demand of me that I do justice to it at any particular time as far as, in a given inner conflict, I believe I am able to answer for. At any particular time; for here there is no once-for-all: in each situation that demands decision the demarcation line between service and service must be drawn anew—not necessarily with fear, but necessarily with that trembling of the soul that precedes every genuine decision.

Another note must still be added. When men of integrity join a party, they do so out of a conviction that the party strives for a goal of the same general character as their own, and that this goal

is to be reached solely through an energetic alliance of the like-minded. An actual party, however, consists both of genuinely convinced members and of only ostensibly convinced men who have entered it for all kinds of motives, usually out of an inextricable tangle of motives. It may easily happen, of course, that those of pretended convictions predominate. Be that as it may, it is incumbent on those of genuine conviction to resist the dominance of the fictitious faction within the party without crippling the party's energy. A thorny business this is; but without it one cannot serve God in the party, one cannot render Him in the sphere of political organization what is His, God's. What is at stake here is shown most clearly when means are proposed whose nature contradicts the nature of the goal. Here too one is obliged not to proceed on principle, but only to advance ever again in the responsibility of the line of demarcation and to answer for it; not in order to keep one's soul clean of blood—that would be a vain and wretched enterprise—but in order to guard against means being chosen that will lead away from the cherished goal to another goal essentially similar to those means; for the end never sanctifies the means, but the means can certainly thwart the end.

There is, it seems to me, a front—only seldom perceived by those who compose it—that cuts across all the fronts of the hour, both the external and the internal. There they stand, ranged side by side, the men of real conviction who are found in all groups, all parties, all peoples, yet who know little or nothing of one another from group to group, from party to party, from people to people. As different as the goals are in one place and in another, it is still *one* front, for they are all engaged in the one fight for human truth. But human truth is noth-

ing other than the faithfulness of man to the one truth that he cannot possess, that he can only serve, his fidelity to the truth of God. Remaining true to the truth, as much as he can, he strives to his goal. The goals are different, very different, but if each way has been trod in truth, the lines leading to these goals intersect, extended beyond them, in the truth of God. Those who stand on the crossfront, those who know nothing of one another, have to do with one another.

We live at a juncture in which the problem of a common human destiny has become so obstinate that the experienced administrators of the political principle are, for the most part, only able to go through the motions of matching its demands. They offer counsel but

know none. They struggle against one another, and every soul struggles against itself. They need a language to understand one another and have no language except the current political jargon fit only for declamations. For sheer power they are impotent, for sheer tricks they are incapable of acting decisively. Perhaps in the hour when the catastrophe sends in advance its final warning, those who stand on the crossfront will have to come to the rescue. They who have in common the language of human truth must then unite to attempt in common to give at last to God what is God's, or, what here means the same thing since when mankind has lost its way it stands before God, to give to man what is man's in order to rescue him from being devoured by the political principle.

THE CHURCH IS NOT CLERICAL

HENRI-IRÉNÉE MARROU

AT ITS CORE—and this is always the case when one really gets to the heart of the matter—it is very simple; there is not really any problem. No, the Church is not "clerical." The Church is ourselves, it is the People of God, the new and true Israel, the people whom God has chosen, the community of the elect, marked with the seal, the mystical body of Christ, or, again, the Spouse, the Kingdom, the City of God accomplishing its pilgrimage across historical time.

This community is, of course, a society organized, hierarchical, monarchical: this we must not forget, nor should we ever risk forgetting it; but this rather complex hierarchy which exercises its authority over the mass of the faithful is in the service of the faithful and of their spiritual welfare: St. Peter feels himself honored at bearing the title of "servant of the servants of God," and this formula is not an affected humility, rather does it express the most profound value of the mission confided to the vicar of Christ. (It is worth noting that the first Pope to have made use of this expression, Gregory the Great, and the one who gave it its widespread currency, Gregory the Seventh, rank among those pontiffs who were the most energetic and most aware of their authority.)

Here we touch upon an essential point; the comparative history of religion aids us in understanding this spe-

cific character of the Christian Church: what a difference, for example, between it and the Buddhist or Manichean community. These latter two religions admit of two very distinct categories of adherents: members in the superior category alone, *bhiksu*, *bhiksuni* (the man or woman who belongs to a Buddhist monastic order), and among the Manicheans the Elect, are what one might call believers in full exercise, believers who, putting into application the consequences of their beliefs, can hope for the deliverance or the salvation which has been promised to them; as for the others, the simple adherent (*upasaka* or Auditors), they can only participate in the merits of the first by almsgiving and other services which they render to them, and they will see themselves rewarded, thanks to reincarnation, in another life. There is nothing comparable to this in Christianity. No special privilege has ever been recognized or claimed either for our religious orders or for our clergy.

I could continue at length on this theme; in fact, a whole course could be given over to this topic, a course in which philology would contend with history, only to expand into theology and possibly into mysticism. (I would remind you, for example, of the ambiguity attached to the word *priest*; we make use of it to translate simultaneously both the Greek word *hierous*, a word which is properly applied only to the transcendent priesthood of the unique Mediator and, by participation, to the common priesthood of the faithful; and, on the other hand, as a rendering of the functional term *presbuteros*, literally *elder*, just as *bishop* signifies guardian or

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watcher, and *deacon* signifies servant. But if I were to pursue such a tack, even sticking only to the essentials, you would doubtlessly accuse me of escaping into the clouds and of dodging the difficulty of the subject—our difficulties.

What I have said up till now does not define an ideal, but a spiritual reality, that is to say, something more real than mere appearances; it is indeed the sole true reality of the Church. But there is, along with that, the world of appearances, the data of daily experience, "the empirical Catholic Church," as Protestant historians love to say in opposing it to the City of God as defined by St. Augustine. The problem of clericalism leads us to touch upon a very profound aspect of the mystery of the Church, a mystery much more complex than some of the formulas would lead you to suppose, formulas such as "visible Church, invisible Church," formulas which an exact theology has never been really able to accept. The Church is at once in history and at the same time tending toward an eschatological fulfillment. The Kingdom of God is already among us, and yet we are awaiting the return of the Lord; the Church is holy, *sine macula nec ruga*, but still sinners abound among us, and there is sin within each one of us. The best formula that I have encountered to express this ineffable mystery is that of Mgr. Charles Journet: "The Church is without sin, but not without sinners. . . . Its frontiers divide in two the being of its children."

That is what puts us at our ease in making a frontal assault upon this delicate aspect of our subject: that there have been, in spite of the beautiful doctrine recalled to mind above, deviations, excesses in the matter of clericalism, who can deny? Certainly not the historian! I recall having come across in a medieval text this strange formula:

"Sacerdotes eorumque sectatores," the priests and their partisans, which is, to say the least, strange. When a baron of the Middle Ages, after a life filled with pillage, theft, rape, brigandage, war and murder, sets aside in his will a rich endowment for the neighboring monastery or church, on the condition that they offer prayers for him, he is certainly acting in conformity with the Christian faith, but this manner of drawing a check against the communion of saints seems to me to be more characteristic of the behavior of a Buddhist or Manichean than a Christian. Again, what are we to say, for example, concerning what history reveals to us (and it is often a distressing revelation) about the practice of receiving communion: you know what a decline there had been (a decline begun, as a matter of fact, in the East earlier than in the West) in the practice of frequent communion; the faithful no longer communicated more than three times, and ultimately no more than once, a year; a situation which meant that the priest had now come not only to consecrate but even to communicate in the name of the entire community, the faithful no longer participated in the liturgy (except spiritually), but rather, as they say, "assisted at the holy sacrifice." You know how difficult it was to turn back this tide; a truly revolutionary decree from Saint Pius X, issued on December 20, 1905, was required to accomplish this.

I must appear to you to be somewhat stubborn in getting at my subject in such an indirect manner, but I think these references might be helpful in illuminating those difficulties in the midst of which we find ourselves struggling in our daily lives and actions.

It is impossible to avoid dealing with the Middle Ages. Mounier used to love to speak of "the late (in the sense of

deceased) Christendom"; we have not as yet succeeded in burying this past, a past which is much closer to us than it might seem. I should like to take advantage of this occasion in order to denounce a certain myth concerning the Middle Ages. The medieval ideal of Christendom, the single historically accessible model of a truly healthy civilization, has exerted and continues to exert a real fascination over some of our contemporaries; and not only over Catholics or Christians; I can recall a phrase from one of those theorists of the phenomenon of "civilization," a man widely read during the 'thirties, Waldo Frank. He was an American of Jewish background, and, I believe, in his personal beliefs an agnostic. With what enthusiasm did he celebrate that Christianity in which there lived together, fraternally, side by side, "the emperor and the serf, the pope and the mendicant, Dante and his valet."

Certainly it had become necessary to react against that scorn into which the Renaissance and the eighteenth century philosophy of enlightenment had plunged the Middle Ages and its "obscurantism," its "Gothic" spirit, but now that these things have been rightfully reestablished, it becomes necessary to say, and especially to Christians, that, remarkable as it might have been, medieval civilization was nonetheless not the City of God already come down to earth. This may seem obvious and naive, yet it is important to emphasize it: the Christian philosophy of history is oriented toward the future, toward a realization yet to come, toward eschatology. We must not allow our heads to be turned backwards, with our eyes fixed on an ideal past which we would like to reestablish and restore, as was for too long the attitude of Catholics who, reacting against the distressing innovations

"owing to the evil of the times," sought to repair the breaches which had been opened by the anti-clerical French Republic, by the French Revolution, by the Reformation and the Renaissance, etc.

It is only right to restore to its truly historical proportions the myth of this Christendom, of this civilization which preferred to see everything completely subordinated to the exigencies of the Christian faith. It was an ideal, it existed in the consciences and in the wills of men who with all their hearts sought to translate this ideal into the realm of fact, but this ideal was never one hundred per cent empirically realized; there were always some sectors of the civilization, of the medieval soul, which had never been Christianized in any depth (the ideal of courtly love among the Troubadours, for example); on the other hand, Christendom had already begun to come undone even before it had fulfilled itself, under the pressure of new forces, such as the rebirth of the pagan ideal of the state (with the jurists of Bologna, Frederick the Second, Philip the Fair), or the appearances of the first stages of capitalism.

I would denounce this myth of Christendom in another sense: the representation that has been made of it, especially in Catholic circles, remains mythical enough, that is, not sufficiently conforming to what might be attained as historical truth. The medieval period, such as it has been, "*wie es eigentlich gewesen*," reveals itself as much less clerical than one might imagine. People are always evoking the picture of Gregory the Seventh and the Emperor Henry the Fourth at Canossa, but there are all those other cases, involving Charlemagne, Lothaire, the Ottos, Henry the Third, where it is, on the contrary, the emperor who takes into his hands the

spiritual interests of the Church, summons the Pope to his tribunal and either confirms him or "resigns" him, not to say dismisses and replaces. Exceptional cases? Perhaps, but under its most normal form medieval society (picture, if you will, the beautiful fresco in the chapel of the Spaniards at Sainte-Marie-Nouvelle de Florence) has always accorded a place, subordinate yet symmetrical, to the lay power alongside of ecclesiastical power: on one side the Pope, the bishops, etc., on the other the emperor, the kings, the lords—and let us not forget the University, most often "clerical" in a sense, but nonetheless representing values other than those of the Hierarchy.

Catholic historians have not given enough importance to this fact; too often (and herein is the limitation of the work of the lamented Dean Fliche, a work in other respects so fertile), we are given a Guelph version of medieval history, written from the point of view of the clerical party. But that is only one side of the question; it would be false to suggest that the Ghibellines were all heretics, worthy of excommunication. Dante is outside of neither Christendom nor the Church!

You must still be thinking that I am at some distance from the problems of today. As a matter of fact, I am right at the heart of my subject. It is very important to state that even Christendom, the "sacral" Christendom of the Middle Ages, recognized the legitimate, necessary role of a power, a lay **element** balancing (although there is the ontological inequality of the two swords), buttressing the power exercised by clerical hands. The Church, without sin, is never without sinners, and for good reason: it is composed, not of an angelic species, but rather of men, which is to say—with the single exception of the im-

maculately conceived Mary—of sinners. "All power corrupts." All power, placed in the hands of men, must be constantly tempered, checked, limited, lest it expose its possessors, who are, after all, but men to the dangers of overstepping their bounds. When the faithful manifest, I do not say too much submission, but too much passivity, too much indifference with regard to the authority of their legitimate superiors, the faithful expose the superiors to insurmountable temptations, leaving aside the question of God's grace.

The unfortunate thing (and here we touch upon one of the deep-seated reasons which have impelled Catholic historians to adopt the point of view of the Guelph party, and which have pushed contemporary Catholicism toward some forms of clericalism which the Middle Ages itself never knew), the unfortunate fact is that, since the development of a civilization not only lay but anti-ecclesiastical, anti-Catholic and finally anti-Christian, this necessary role of a laity acting as a counterbalance has been assumed, not by Christians, but by enemies of the Church and of the Cross of Christ. It will be useful to recall here some of Maritain's statements concerning masks and roles: "... The roles of iniquity are played by masks or figures of justice, but the roles of justice are played (and corrupted) by the masks of iniquity...."

I insist, in the first place because it is historically true, and secondly because there is here a lesson for the practical order, that, fearful, as they say, of giving aid and comfort to the enemies of the Church, we forget too often, we Catholics, that within the very bosom of the Church there must be filled the difficult but necessary role of the Ghibelline; we rely too much, as a matter of fact, on these enemies to give aid to our Church

in the fulfillment of its mission. I trust that I shall not scandalize anyone in stating that there is a Christian anticlericalism necessary to the health of the Church. I shall always remember a piece of advice which my grand-uncle the canon gave me when I was a child: "My child," he said, "always be suspicious of priests." He was a wise man and a holy man; I think today, at the age of fifty-one, that he has done his share to make a good Catholic out of me.

As you can see, once it has been demythologized, the medieval era still has much that is worthwhile to offer us—which does not mean that we ought to imitate it in its entirety, as if no other type of Christian civilization were possible. As for myself, I am quite aware of the contingent and the specific in the history of western Christianity: when one is acquainted with Christian antiquity (for prior to the barbarian invasions which marked the beginning of the Middle Ages, the West had known several centuries of Christian life, several centuries of Christianity), when one is acquainted with the Byzantine world whose Christian civilization continued without interruption that of the Eastern Empire descended from Constantine, one is struck by the much more clerical character, relatively speaking, of western Christianity as compared to the character of these other Christianities. And yet all are equally sacral.

There is a phenomenon there so macroscopic, so evident, that I should like to trace it in a few words or by means of several examples. The collapse, the disappearance, so to speak, of the Roman civilization under the assaults of the barbarians led the clergy and monks of the High Middle Ages to assume properly human responsibilities, responsibilities which in and of themselves were alien to their mission proper, simply be-

cause the clerics and the monks were the only ones prepared to preserve a minimum of civilization and culture, both of which are indispensable to the Christian life. Thus at Rome the tasks of supplying food and of rendering public assistance were seen to, during the first centuries of our era, by the imperial fiat; but when in an Italy disorganized by the Lombard invasion, the Byzantine emperor could no longer assume this indispensable function, it became necessary for the Roman Church to look after these duties in their stead. This in turn gave rise to the appearance of the deacons, that curious institution of monastic origin which survives down into our own day in the title of Cardinal-deacon. In France, during the Merovingian period, when the disappearance of the classical type of school led to the virtual disappearance of all instruction, it became necessary for the clergy, in order that it might revive in the following generation, to busy itself with the founding of schools in order to teach reading to a few children, from among whom sufficiently qualified priests might be recruited. I have chosen these examples because I have had occasion to study them at close range, but as you know, there are many others: hospitals, bridges, etc.

When, departing from this initial nucleus, there develops a new civilization, this medieval or modern civilization (for ours issues from this nucleus without any interruption or breaks), assumes quite naturally an ecclesiastical, clerical form, a form which the institutions and services relating to these domains have developed. The modern university came out of the development of the episcopal schools: the word *clericus* in medieval Latin signified at once both the tonsured and the lettered man. Why the surprise then at the sometimes abusively

clerical character of the first phases of this civilization, at the excesses or deviations which I denounced at the start?

When being a member of the monastic orders or of the clergy was the indispensable condition for the reception of a minimum of intellectual formation, how can we be surprised that the Christian people should have expected, and even required from the clerical hierarchy or from the monastic elite directives, initiative, a direction, even in matters which, I repeat, do not properly belong to the spiritual power? I believe that I have extricated the deep-seated roots of what the moderns, either sighing or groaning, call clericalism: a situation of fact, which did not allow at its origin any other practical solution, has given rise to a tradition which was for a very long time and very widely maintained, in spite of the emergence of a new set of lay values in the modern epoch, a tradition of which it is not at

all certain that the last survivals are today always clearly perceived—or perfectly legitimized.

I should like, by way of conclusion, to recall the limitations of history's lesson: it proposes examples, suggests points of view; it does not have the capacity to dictate a judgment. One must distinguish between the conditions of appearance and the intrinsic value of institutions. The Middle Ages were able to elaborate, under the pressure of contingent conditions, solutions which were good in themselves and which represented a progress still valuable. But the problem has been posed: all that which is clerical is not necessarily coessential with the Church; to go beyond that observation must lead to an effort of reflection, in turn liberating and creative, a reflection for which the historian, having completed his task, must give way to the man of action and to the theologian.

Translated by JAMES J. GREENE

SYSTEM, SPACE, AND INTELLECT IN RENAISSANCE SYMBOLISM

WALTER J. ONG

I

ONE WAY OF LOOKING at the Renaissance is to regard it as a time when the world was flooded with sound. This was the melodious age of poetry and rhetoric, following on the vocally impoverished, cacophonous Middle Ages. The ancient tongues found voice again, and the vernaculars came into their own, spurred by the renewed attention to rhetoric, the art of speaking, that is to say, of speaking aloud.

Today we are especially aware of the aural emphasis in Renaissance culture through the work of scholars such as Lucien Febvre and through the exhaustive treatments of the rhetorical tradition which has become an American specialty at the hands of Morris W. Croll, C. S. Baldwin, Donald Lemen Clark, T. W. Baldwin, Rosemond Tuve, Douglas Bush, Richard McKeon, Maurice B. McNamee, Sister Miriam Joseph Rauh, George Williamson, and others. But there is another series of phenomena which marks this same period and of which, largely through our growing knowledge of the history of science, we are becoming more aware. For the Renaissance is also the age out of which

modern mechanics and modern physical science grow. It is the age not only of Poggio and Erasmus, but of Copernicus, Vesalius, and Galileo as well.

The outlook which terminated in the mathematical transformation of thinking and yielded the world of modern science has roots which are much older than the age of humanism and are exceedingly ramified. Recent studies have underlined the fact that the humanists in general exercised a retarding influence on the physical sciences and have stressed the fact that the pre-humanist scholastic age was the great seed-bed of modern scientific habits of mind. Since Duhem, the role in the development of modern science played by the impetus theories elaborated in medieval Paris and elsewhere has been studied in detail, and the more recent work of A. Ç. Crombie, Annaliese Maier, and a host of others has filled in our knowledge of many other aspects of physical and optical theory. Panofsky has pointed out certain fascinating analogies between the aims and performance of Gothic architecture and scholasticism,¹ and has further described the evolution in painting which, by the High Renaissance, resulted in the assertion of a kind of infinite pictorial space, through which the beholder looked and in which he felt himself situated, and to which all other interests of the artists had finally to yield: no longer could a floor be tilted up to display its parquetry nor the animals in a hunt treated each as a thing interesting in itself, enveloped in its own particular space more or less independent of its "real" position in "modern" or "infinite" perspective.² This

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dominance of geometrical considerations in man's response to reality has obvious scientific implications, and Benesch has suggested certain connections between it and the new cosmology.³

However, these various shifts in emphasis are further involved with something more pervasive than architecture or painting or even the new science. In the present study I should like to draw attention to a series of developments in the history of ideas which specifically relate the shifts in symbolization and conceptualization observable in the physical sciences to another series of shifts in the ways of representing the field of knowledge and intellectual activity itself. This latter series of shifts is observable in the three *artes sermocinales*, or arts of communication—grammar, logic, and most particularly dialectic, or, as it came later to be styled, logic. At present, it seems best not to go into the question of causal relationships between these shifts, to decide whether the way one thought about knowledge brought on the changes in ways of thinking about the world, or whether the converse was true. The sequence could be either way, or better, both ways. The psychological operations involved in the shifts are so subtle and concern so many people over so great a period of time it is impossible to discover in full detail which new way of symbolization preceded which. The important thing is that the two shifts work in concert, that man's view of the universe and his view of his own mind are in great part correlatives.

The present document will be scant, for full documentation, which has to be largely from original sources, would itself require much more space for notes than this entire text. Such documentation should soon be available, with other material, in a full-length study in

book form, *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue*, scheduled for publication in the autumn of 1957 by Harvard University Press.

II

In many ways, the greatest shift in the way of conceiving knowledge between the ancient and the modern world takes place in the movement from a pole where knowledge is conceived of in terms of discourse and hearing and persons to one where it is conceived of in terms of observation and sight and objects. This shift dominates all others in Western intellectual history, and as compared to it, the supposed shift from a deductive to an inductive method pales into insignificance. For, in terms of this shift, the coming into prominence of deduction, which must be thought of in terms of visual, not auditory, analogies—the "drawing" of conclusions, and so on, not the "hearing" of a master—is already a shift toward the visual and a preparatory step for induction, from which deduction was never entirely separated anyhow. Stress on induction follows the stress on deduction as manifesting a still further visualization in the approach to knowledge, with tactics based on "observation," an approach preferably through sight.

The remote origins of the auditory-to-visual shift need not concern us in detail here. They have been traced to the difference between the Hebraic concept of knowledge, auditory and consequently personalist and existential, and the Greek concept, based on analogy with vision.⁴ For the Hebraic (as perhaps for the present-day Arabic world still), to know (*yadha'*) meant to know one's way around, to "know what's what," to "be in the know," whereas for the Greek, to know *γινώσκω* meant to see, to intuit, to envision intellectually.

However, compared to the modern world, even the Greek tended to set knowledge within an auditory frame. Only with the slow development of scientism out of the Greek tradition have the promises or possibilities latent in the visualist orientation of the term γιγνώσκω been finally realized. Socrates' technique, if not his objective, had been real, oral dialogue. Plato retained this dialogue performance in reporting Socrates' teaching, but he reduced it to the visualist medium of writing and, in his own mind, allowed concern for dialogue to be eclipsed by the visualist notion which obsesses him, that of the "idea," a term used originally to designate the look or appearance of things. Following Plato had come Aristotle's search for sciences which were "objective"—objects being items in a visile's universe, as persons are in an audile's.

Even Aristotle, who thought of himself as the inventor of what we should today style logic, is far from decisive in dissociating this science from dialectic, that is, from implication with dialogue and sound. He uses the term λογική to refer to dialectical reasoning, with its suggestion of dialogue, and generally equates λογικῶς and διαλεκτικῶς, contrasting both with the term αναλυτικῶς which refers to scientific procedure, and with συλλογισμός, which refers to formal reasoning or inference. Most significant of all, his notion of predication is based on "saying" or vocal assertion. Aristotle's categories or predicaments are radically things said of, or accusations brought vocally against, a subject.

This kind of inability to dissociate an art of thinking from an art of speaking is passed on, directly or indirectly, through Cicero to the Middle Ages, and thence through John of Salisbury⁵ and, more equivocally, through Peter of Spain, until it floods into the Renais-

sance, where it rekindles interest in actual dialogue⁶ and crosses with other tendencies to generate curious offspring such as Ramism.

Compared to the ancient world, the world of scholasticism is a visualist age. The ancient educational ideal of the orator here yields to a less auditory ideal as rhetoric is superseded by dialectic, and dialectic itself begins to lose the two-sided character of genuine dialogue and attenuate itself into a teacher's monologue under the lecture system of the teachers' unions which we call universities. Isidore of Seville's kind of encyclopedism in his *Etymologies*, drawn out of the ancient world and organized around words, is replaced by the new encyclopedism of Vincent of Beauvais' *Speculum*, a concept which is so typically medieval as to furnish the Medieval Academy of America with the name of its journal—and which seeks to concentrate man's knowledge in the visile's symbol of a mirror. But most of all, the visualist tendency is fed from within scholastic dialectic or logic itself.

Studies matured within the last decade are beginning to bring out the startling advances over Aristotelian logic made by the medieval logic which has four centuries lain almost completely unknown, even to those—or especially to those—who think of themselves as neo-scholastic philosophers, but who profess a logic which is not at all that of the main medieval current, as represented in Peter of Spain, Ockham, Buridan, Burleigh, Tartaret, and the rest famous as old scholastic logicians. As against Aristotle's logic, medieval logic is, like modern mathematical logic, highly quantified⁷—which means, for our present purposes, that it is a logic with a very high visual component.

This logic, I should like to suggest, is best viewed not as the prelude to or

as the accompaniment of Thomistic metaphysics, with which it has almost nothing to do, although it is in its own right and on its own terrain quite as respectable an achievement, but as the prelude to modern mathematics and mathematical physics. In this historical perspective, medieval scholastic logic appears as a kind of pre-mathematics, a subtle and unwitting preparation for the large-scale operations in quantitative modes of thinking which will characterize the modern world. In assessing the meaning of scholasticism, one must keep in mind an important and astounding fact: in the whole history of the human mind, mathematics and mathematical physics come into their own, in a way which has changed the face of the earth and promises or threatens to change it even more, at only one place and time, that is, in Western Europe immediately after the scholastic experience. Elsewhere, no matter how advanced the culture on other scores, and even along mathematical lines, as in the case of the Babylonian, nothing like a real mathematical transformation of thinking takes place—not among the ancient Egyptians or Assyrians or Greeks or Romans, not among the peoples of India nor the Chinese nor the Japanese, not among the Aztecs or Mayas, not in Islam despite the promising beginnings there, any more than among the Tartars or the Avars or the Turks. These people can all now share the same common scientific knowledge, but the scientific tradition itself which they share is not a merging of various parallel discoveries made by their various civilizations. It represents a new state of mind. However great contributions other civilizations may hereafter make to the tradition, our scientific world traces its origins back always to seventeenth and sixteenth century Europe, to the place

where for some three centuries and more the arts course taught in universities and para-university schools had pounded into the heads of youth a study program consisting almost exclusively of a highly quantified logic and a companion physics, both taught on a scale and with an enthusiasm never approximated or even dreamt of in the ancient academies.⁸

In the scholastic arts program as registered in the *Chartularium* of the University of Paris and in other such documents, the quantified formal logic of the Middle Ages, it is to be noted, is a companion piece, not so much of metaphysics, as might be popularly imagined, for metaphysics as such amounted to little enough historically in scholastic philosophy, but rather, chiefly, of the physical or natural sciences. In this, as well as in its own internal preoccupations and structure, it shows itself the medieval correlative of modern formal logic or mathematical logic, which also appears conjointly with an interest in physical science.

In these perspectives, which can only be suggested here, certain phenomena characteristic of the Renaissance can be regarded as the culmination of a quantified, visualist drive more concerted than the world had ever before known. This drive is marked by an increased sensitivity to space and a growing sophistication in ways of dealing with quantity and extension, which comes to a climax not only in the neutral Copernican cosmic space that supplanted the less abstract, more crudely physical space of "favored directions" in Aristotelian cosmology,⁹ but also in even more subtle psychological shifts felt through the whole of society and affecting man's entire outlook on reality. The sensitivity to space is obvious in the whole medieval, and even more the Renaissance,

cultural complex, and is seen, for example, in the artist's attitude toward the world which he projected from his consciousness. "Of all artists," remarks György Kepes, "the Greeks alone reveal space concepts limited by Euclidean geometry."¹⁰ With the Middle Ages, the artistic sensibility was already more spatially sophisticated, even when its relationship to the extended universe seemed more simple:

The finite universe of late medieval times found a pictorial counterpart in the limited, shallow, "abstract" spaces of Giotto. Stage by stage, art kept pace with developing cosmological concepts... The past seven centuries have given us the "symbolic" space of early Flemish masters; the "rational" space of fifteenth century Renaissance Italy, deep and clear; the "ideal" space of Raphael and the High Renaissance, in which a clear foreground, continuing the spatial characteristics of the world in which the observer finds himself, converges upon a spatially mysterious, other-worldly realm; the soaring, levitational space of Gothic cathedrals; the poised and balanced spatial volumes of the High Renaissance church of San Biagio at Montepulciano; the "exploding" space of the German Baroque at Vierzehnheiligen; the pervasive space of the Impressionists, dissolving all solid form; the laminated, timebound space of the later Cubists.¹¹

The mind has its spaces, too, and at the time of the Renaissance, nothing is more evident than the role which spatially oriented conceptualizations begin to play in the notion of knowledge itself. The general stage had been set, as we have seen, by the quantification of medieval logic, which gave occasion to think of mental operations less by analogy with hearing and more by analogy with more or less overtly spatial or geometric forms. The central strategic operation in the procedure of visualizing

knowledge at this time was undoubtedly the exploitation of letterpress printing. I believe that there is no doubt of an intimate connection between the mental habits encouraged by medieval logic and the emergence of printing, which is a curious phenomenon in the extreme, for the reason that all the elements necessary for its use had been known from antiquity—lead castings, brass dies, paper or its equivalent, ink, and presses, none of these were new. However, the reasons for the interest in and final development of successful printing techniques cannot be gone into here. But the psychological implications of the process must be looked at.

Basically, the new procedure was a technique for giving permanence to sound by transmuting it more perfectly into silence, a technique for fixing the word in space more adroitly than ever before. Not only was it now possible to have an unlimited number of paper surfaces on each of which words were set in exactly the same spatial relationship to one another, but the very technique of producing this spatial organization was itself an adventure in local motion such as the parts of words had never before seen.

Writing had reduced the sound of words to visual equivalents, and the alphabet had further dismembered these equivalents in visual parts. But printing from movable type cast from matrices struck from a die or punch—the essence of the achievement perfected by the Fust-Schöffer-Gutenberg combination—had spatially unmoored these parts themselves. Letters thus acquire local motion. More than that, their manufacture had been reduced to a matter of simple local maneuver. With one set of punches, one could move over bits of softer metal and strike out whole boxfuls of matrices. Casting from one set of

matrices, one could produce whole fonts of type. With one font of type, one could set up an indefinite number of lines and compose an indefinite amount of type for making up an indefinite number of printing forms. From one form, one could print an indefinite number of pages simply by moving the paper into contact with the type and pressing it. Space had become pregnant with meaning, not only in the orderly arrangement within the book itself, but even more in the font of type, and still more in the little box of punches, in whose tiny compass were imprisoned more pagefuls of words than in a pre-Gutenberg inkwell the size of the Heidelberg tun.

This advance in the way of dealing with knowledge could not but affect the notions of what knowledge itself was. Curtius has examined the ways in which writers, in the Middle Ages and later, exploit the book and activities associated with the scribal art as symbols.¹² But in this connection the evolution of the very notion of what a book is deserves closer looking into. With the invention of printing, this notion itself undergoes metamorphosis. Rather than a record of something someone had said, a book now became an object, belonging more to the world of things and less to the world of words. Silent reading now began to replace the older oral habits of the manuscript age, when even a scholar reading privately to himself habitually picked the words off the page one by one and aloud.¹³ Book titles change from addresses to the reader to become labels like the labels on boxes, for, with the spread of printing, books became items manufactured like tables and chairs. As objects or things, they obviously "contained" knowledge. And, since knowledge could be "contained" in books, why not in the mind as well?

At this point, the whole intellectual world goes hollow. The mind now "contains" knowledge, especially in the compartments of the various arts and sciences, which in turn may "contain" one another, and which all "contain" words. Discourse contains sentences, sentences phrases, phrases words, and words themselves contain ideas. (It is hardly necessary to remark that "sentences" or "periods," "commas," and the other paraphernalia of syntactical analysis were quite other things than this to the ancients and to the medieval man.¹⁴) What is more, ideas contain other ideas, for the Ramist and Kantian notions, as well as the Renaissance scholastic and most neo-scholastic notions of "analysis" are bound up with this outlook.¹⁵

What you are thinking is now less than ever what you are holding converse with yourself about. It is simply what is "in your mind." The new orientation is as ineluctable as it is subtle, rendering ineffectual the very efforts to escape it. Thus, when the humanists attempt a retreat into classical antiquity, their very reason for doing so and their way of conceiving their maneuver reveals them as men of the Gutenberg era. Erasmus' and others' assertion that all the knowledge possible to man is contained in the writings of the ancients clearly manifests the spatialized understanding of knowledge typical of post-medieval man.

The use of printing need not be regarded as the cause of this shift of the focus of knowledge toward spatial analogies, but rather as a spectacular symptom of the general reorientation going on. This reorientation is far flung in its implications, being connected on one side with the emergence of the topical logics (logics of common-places or "place"-logics, and thus in effect space-logics) of Rudolph Agricola and Peter

Ramus and their half-successful bid to replace the predicamental logics (statement-logics); on another side with the interest in plotting the surface of the globe which makes this same Gutenberg era the great age of cartography and exploration; and on still another with what is probably the most fundamental stylistic difference between ancient writing and modern writing—the immeasurably greater exploitation today of visualist metaphors and of imagery which in one way or another admits of diagrammatic analysis.

III

The related visualist phenomena which appear in such riot are all, to a certain extent, subsumed or summarized in the changed way of conceptualizing the field of knowledge as a whole. The stepped-up visualism which reaches its initial climax in the Gutenberg era and thence moves on to still greater conquests was having consequences in man's way of picturing the universe of the mind quite as real as its consequences in man's way of thinking of the physical universe. No "field" of knowledge was spoken of yet—that was to come later, as field physics was to come later, too—but the ways of thinking about mental activity had grown increasingly spatial in the Middle Ages.

One of the great climaxes in scholastic philosophy is the wave of interest in what we call today the "structure" of a science (the term was to come into use in the late Renaissance period). By the late sixteenth century, this interest had become an obsession in the discussions on method and related matters which Ramus, Descartes, and Francis Bacon do not at all initiate—as it is sometimes taken for granted that they do—but rather bring to a climax. Well before these men, the method discussions

are big with diagrammatic symbols: "method" itself (a "way after" or "way through"), *ascensus* and *descensus*, *analysis* and *synthesis* (a mathematical notion used by Ramists, and by others after them, to replace the more elusive, less diagrammatic *genesis* which had been the term Aristotle himself paired with *analysis*), and the like.¹⁶

These concepts derive from antiquity and are to be accounted for basically by the fact that any attempt to *explain* mental activity tends to deal with the activity in terms of analogies with the sense of sight, since reduction in terms of one or another type of sense knowledge is inevitable, and reduction in terms of other senses, notably of hearing, while enhancing the mysterious and existentialist implications of knowledge, serves little to satisfy the demand for some sort of explanation, for "clarification." However, despite their presence in philosophy from the beginning, nothing in antiquity or in the Middle Ages matches the clatter which such terms make from about the 1540's on. At Cambridge in the 1580's, as at Paris three or four decades earlier, the method disputes threaten to set all the university dons and a great many of the students at one another's ears, first in the philosophy courses on the arts faculty, and thereafter by a kind of chain reaction up through the other faculties of medicine, law, and theology.

The method disputes had been initiated in an age which could not yet differentiate philosophies from one another with the adroitness which we feel we can command today, for it had as yet no "isms" at all in its conceptual apparatus. When the early sixteenth century speaks of what we should today glibly call "Thomism," "realism," and "nominalism," it habitually thinks not in terms of different philosophies but

in terms of different persons—of “blessed Thomas,” of the “reals” (*reales*), and of the “nominals” (*nominales*)—with their different approaches or “ways” (*viae*), or else of these persons’ different “opinions” (*opiniones*).¹⁷

Needless to say, there is no talk of philosophical “systems,” for the application of this particular concept to philosophy is a relatively late product of epistemological visualism, tied up directly with the transit from Aristotelian to Copernican space.

IV

The notion of a philosophical “system” or of philosophical “systems” is so well established today that it is hard for us to believe that it has a history at all. *Systema* is, of course, an ancient Greek term, translatable perhaps as “set-up” or organized, composite whole, but its application to the realm of the mind, and in particular to philosophy, becomes current only after the medieval experience terminating in the methodological disputes, which give unequivocal evidence of the penchant of the time of viewing knowledge with the help of visualist, quasi-diagrammatic constructs.

Conceived of as a “way through” a problem or investigation, or as a “way after” a desired answer, method is patently a concept based on a visualist analogy, which takes up the concept of “way” and further visualizes it by conferring on it a fuller implication of direction. This fashion of dealing with the notion of “way” contrasts strikingly with the Scriptural use of this notion when Christ asserts, in an obviously personalist and existentialist context, “I am the way”—the “I” being here not only a Person, but One to Whom the audile’s rather than the visile’s world is particularly relevant, the Incarnate Word of God, Who is also the Truth and the Life.

By setting the term “way” in this context, the biblical text, recognizing the general validity of the “way” metaphor, in effect discourages attempts to elaborate on its visualist or spatial implications independently of auditory or oral connections. For, while the work of the Incarnation, in Christ’s own earthly life and as continued by His Church, takes place in space, and while notions such as “mission” can apply to it, it is always the work of One to Whose Person the auditory-oral notion of Word particularly belongs. The work of Christ’s visible Church is carried on in space, but by means of preaching—*fides ex auditu*—as well as of the sacraments, which are visible signs, to be sure, but, as Aquinas long ago pointed out, which differ from the quasi-sacraments of the Old Law by having words (or, in the case of matrimony, the equivalent—a consent) as their determinating “form.” The very Sacrifice of the New Law, unlike those of the Old, is effected by words. In this context, it becomes impossible to interpret the “way” which is the God-Man in terms of crude visualist constructs alone. And in the interior life, although “the Kingdom of God is within you,” Catholic spiritual writers find little ascetic value in the contemplation of mandalas or other semi-diagrammatic constructs associated with Yoga and Buddhism, but a great deal of value in an auditory-oral directive: silence.

The “way” of the methodologists, on the other hand, was free or gradually freed itself, from auditory or oral commitments as it was elaborated in terms of ascent (*ascensus*) and descent (*descensus*), division, partition, distribution, induction, deduction, analysis, and the rest of the psycho-geometrical apparatus used to describe the intellectual processes. Here we are in a definitely spatial

universe. Its psychic space is like that of the Aristotelian physical cosmos. The Aristotelian cosmology as is well known, did not operate by purely geometrical laws such as Copernicus, Galileo, and Newton were to favor, but rather in terms of favored directions, up and down, the directions presumably followed by substances seeking their natural levels in the universe. Horizontal motion was, in this scheme, difficult if not impossible to account for intelligibly. This universe was directional, as against the Newtonian universe, which was to be more purely geometrical, directionally neuter. Now the space which figures, by analogy, in the method literature is directional, too, for the very notion of method is highly directional. Method proceeds to an end through median points or "means." The axiomatics associated with methodology is thought of as concerned with ascent to the first principles or axioms or *dignitates*, and with descent from them to conclusions.¹⁸

One trouble with this directional universe was that the ends toward which or away from which it moved often, if not always, proved to be unattainable limits such as those in calculus rather than readily ascertainable points. Once one moved away from generalized discussion to particulars, it was very difficult to produce genuinely first principles. Each of the various arts or sciences was nominally connected with its first principles, but, although one could intuitively discern the order which a science ideally should have in relation to its first principles arrived at inductively and thereafter functioning deductively to give the interior structure of the science its consistency, no one could actually produce a complete science fully rigged out with its first principles and all their conclusions. From this point of view, all the

sciences were imperfect, and most of them little more than shambles.

Peter Ramus was to protest this before the University of Paris and the whole world, and, although there was violent resistance to Ramus' own notions on method and although many of his opponents were beyond a doubt intellectually abler men than he, no one could take up his challenge and produce even one thoroughly "methodized" art or science, logically consistent from start to finish.¹⁹ Some few cited Euclid's *Elements*, but Ramus insisted that this, too, was not properly "methodized" or reasoned out. Ramus was, as we know today, to some extent right about Euclid, whose geometry is not quite so complete a deductive system as it has been taken to be.²⁰ However, Ramus' strictures against Euclid give evidence of impatience more than of genuine insight, and his own attempts to remedy the intolerable situation in which he found all the arts by "methodizing" not only geometry but all the other arts as well, are the amateurish works of a desperate man who is not a thinker but merely an erudite pedagogue.

With the method discussion at this point and the visualist tide running strong, an important shift took place in the whole notion of space, signaled if not caused by the publication of Copernicus' *De revolutionibus* in 1543, the year of Ramus' own first published works. Copernicus' astronomy approaches the universe from the point of view of purely geometrical space, in which no direction was more favored than any other, since neither up-and-down motion nor any other directional motion had priority over other kinds, any more than it does in a geometrical abstraction. This new approach had the effect of highlighting the notion of system (*systema*).

Although this term had always been

applicable to the Aristotelian or Ptolemaic cosmos, it was not particularly exploited in this connection for the reason that this cosmos was conceived as one unique system without even an imaginable competitor. The notion of wholeness was so inevitable that it was not particularly attended to. Hence the notion of system, an organized *whole*, was a rather uninteresting one. It was not even practicable to imagine the parts of the Aristotelian universe as lesser wholes, for this universe had no really detachable parts forming little systems of their own. The earth-moon relationship could not be imagined as a system comparable to the sun-earth relationship, because neither was conceived of in the purely geometric terms which invite such comparison. The sphere of the moon was a *special* part of the cosmos which belonged in its own altogether particular place among the celestial spheres, as the spheres of the sun belonged in its own place. Neither was thinkable as being anywhere but in its own orbit.

The Copernican hypothesis changed all this. The newly proposed explanation encouraged thinking of even the Aristotelian system as a system or organized whole by proposing another system to supplant it. It was a case now of one whole against another. Moreover, the Copernican cosmos itself was a system involving an incalculable number of minor systems: not only that of the earth and sun, but that of the moon and the earth, of Jupiter's moons and their mother planet, of the rings of Saturn, and, as was later to appear, of whole solar systems and whole galaxies outside ours.

V

How much the advent of Copernican geometrical cosmic space depended upon the unsatisfactory status of the Aris-

totelian explanation of the external universe and how much upon more subtle pressures due to the general build-up of the visual sensibility symptomized by the emergence of printing in the West, by the phrenetic interest in method, and by many allied phenomena which mark the Copernican period but which are too abundant and complex to be gone into here, no one at present can say. It is certain that Copernicus' new approach was in some measure tied up with subtle psychological forces, for it depended on no new discoveries—these were to come later as corroboration—only on a new way of thinking about what everyone already knew. However this may be, the notion of system, given its new currency, took hold in connection with the universe of knowledge quite as quickly as it did in connection with the physical universe, and exactly in those areas where the method agitation had been strongest. Methods of knowledge give rise to systems of knowledge. Thus we find the Ramist Johann Heinrich Alsted, author of several famous "methodized" encyclopedias,²¹ publishing at Herborn in 1610 his *Double Mnemonic System* of knowledge (*Systema mnemonicum duplex*) and his *Mnemonic System of the Liberal Arts and of all Curriculum Subjects* (*Artium liberalium ac facultatum omnium systema mnemonicum*). This was twenty-one years before the first appearance of Galileo's *Dialogo . . . sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo*. Galileo's work was to give the notion of system an urgency and currency which it had never known before, but the welcome for the notion had been well prepared outside the field of astronomy in works treating the cosmography of the mind.

By the end of the seventeenth century, the habit of thinking of philosophy itself, the quondam love of wisdom, in terms of a "system" had become well

established, and with it the habit of thinking of theological systems and of systems and orbits of other sorts of knowledge as well. Indeed, as early as 1620, a philosophical system, explicitly so-called, had been launched by Alsted: Philosophy, he says, as viewed in the mind is a *habitus*, as viewed outside the mind, a *systema*.²² But if he anticipated Galileo, Alsted—teacher of the important educational reformer Jan Comensky or Comenius, who wrote the *Orbis pictus*, a visual education system—does not anticipate Copernicus. The system of philosophy which he envisions is conceived by analogy with a free-wheeling Copernican universe in a newer geometrical space, for throughout this period system or *systema*, used absolutely and without qualifications, means a celestial system. Having once conceived of various “systems” of philosophy, Alsted and others deal with these “systems” by “harmonizing” them, making use of a conceptualization indubitably associated with the old harmony of the spheres.

What it all came to, or comes to—how far what we call philosophy or theology or history or any other kind of knowledge can be related even analogously to a twirling set of bodies free-wheeling in space—is a matter which no one ever explained. The concept of system simply took unquestioned hold of the mind, applying itself everywhere.

By the early eighteenth century, there is a real epidemic of systems. *The New Intellectual System of the Universe* by Ralph Cudworth has by this time become famous, together with a thousand other systems: book titles announce systems of medicine, systems (that is, school courses) of physics, systems of geography, systems of divinity, metaphysical systems,²³ Bartholomew Keckermann's *System of Rhetoric* (or course in rhe-

toric), *A new System... for a General Peace* (London, 1746), and *A New System of the Gout and Rheumatism* (5th ed.; London, 1719). The fad which Copernicus had loosed was coming into its own.

Anyone could now envision a system. Application of the Aristotelian “system,” if anyone had troubled to advert to it as a system, to the field of knowledge would have been difficult in the extreme. Conceived along Copernican lines, system was a much more maneuverable concept, quite as visually satisfying as method was, and without some of the annoying disabilities of this other earlier favorite. Even as popularly conceived, a method or “way through” suggested patience and painstaking labor—the inability of anyone, except perhaps Euclid, to produce even one perfectly organized or methodized science was embarrassing and discouraging in the extreme. There was difficulty about the very notion of “end” in method, the goal toward which the “way” led, for the great problem of method, at least since Aristotle, had always been this: How is it that in an investigation we can set a methodical procedure, when the method must depend on understanding what we are looking for, and we obviously cannot understand what we are looking for until the investigation itself brings us to it? Thinking of knowledge as governed by the diagrammatic, easily imagined, and only loosely applicable notion of system was more satisfying than thinking of it in terms of method and these conundrums. It was comforting to think of oneself, or of one's enemy, as possessing a philosophical “system,” something which whirled dazzlingly around a center in the mind like the Copernican spheres around the sun, a whole self-contained and independent of the rest of reality. Such pic-

tures could cover intellectual situations of which one knew really very little. The very looseness and inadequacy of the system metaphor was and is one of its greatest recommendations.

VI

The rise of the notion of system as applied to the possessions of the mind is only one in a whole kaleidoscope of phenomena which mark the shift from the more vocal ancient world—truly an audible's world—to what has been called the silent, colorless, and depersonalized Newtonian universe. This is no place to settle whether the shift is to be applauded or regretted. It is here presented simply as an historical fact in the evolution of human thought. As a fact, it deserves to be approached with a humble curiosity out of which we can hope to mature understanding both of ourselves and of external reality.

Certain advances and certain losses connected with the shift are discernible enough. Out of it has come modern science, with the possibility it offers for increasing the subjection of matter and impregnation of matter by spiritual forces, in so far as these spiritual forces can orient themselves within their own spiritual realm. Out of the same shift have come the more contestable advances in human relations themselves, with the possibility of greater social justice which is, if by no means realized, at least ambitioned with conscious concern by far more people today than ever before. For social planning, human engineering, managerial revolutions, and, on the other side of the ledger, the welfare state, are all part and parcel of the "objective" approach to even human existence which, if not initiated, was at least furthered by the new scientism coming out of the Renaissance as by nothing else before.

The new world was a world of objects as nothing before had ever been. An "object" in its basic conception—something thrown against, thrown in the way of—is obviously a formulation with visualist roots, and one predestined to dominate scientific thinking. (One recalls St. Thomas Aquinas' insistence on the "object" in his approach to knowledge and to psychology, for he was a visile if there ever was one.) In this sense, object is opposed not to subject, but to person. Inasmuch as the world of science is a world of objects, which are exteriorities or surfaces, conceived of by analogy with the data of visual apprehension, it is not a world of persons, or interiorities manifesting themselves by a word. For even in this sublunar world, sound or voice comes from the interior of things, not so as to exteriorize this interior but to enable it to communicate with other interiors. Little wonder that in the post-Newtonian object-world, God's voice, too, is silenced, that revelation becomes meaningless, and that the Creator—a visile's God—becomes no more than a kind of mechanical brain. You need no person to run a machine. But you need a person to utter a word. You also need a person to elicit from you an act of faith. For there is no way to believe an object, or even to believe "in" an object in a purely objectified, impersonal context. By definition, objects as such in the sense of impersonalizations should be dealt with by being seen. That is why above the sensible world there are no longer any objects, only persons.

These matters are objects for reflection, not for reform. It is impossible for us to abrogate the history which has shaped our minds and our sensibilities and made us fit for twentieth century existence. We are committed to being intellectual visiles in ways in which earlier men were not, by the very fact

that we are irrevocably explainers, cultists of the clear and distinct, reasonable men. The ideals of reasonable men and scientific explainers need not be repudiated, irrelevant as they have sometimes been and perhaps still are to types of minds and types of approaches other than our own. However, such ideals do need to be complemented by a return to something larger than a merely visible, scientist's view. The history of philosophy itself has largely been the history of a search after more and more adequate visualist or spatialist analogies by which to represent and deal with the real universe and the universe of the mind, but we are living in an age today which has begun to feel uneasy about this quest.

The uneasiness is shown in the growing or recurrent suspicion that such notions as system may, in the last analysis, prove to be philosophical mare's nests. This suspicion need not lead to a new irrationalism at all. It should mean a recurrence of certain other approaches to knowledge which marked the Renaissance, the approach through voice and sound, the Hebraic rather than the Greek approach. Here knowledge is contained not in a system, but in discourse, in conversation which has been going on since man appeared on earth. This point of view submerges the visualist, explanatory approach and with it science itself in something more ultimate and more transcendent, in the existentialist situation, with which our most immediate contact is through voices and persons rather than through observation and objects. In this more living and vocal view of reality, which represents a symbolization the polar opposite of that whose evolution has been discussed so briefly and inadequately here, science is only arrested dialogue of man with man, and an echo of the interior

dialogue in silence of each soul with God.

FOOTNOTES

¹ Erwin Panofsky, *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism* (Latrobe, Pennsylvania: The Archabbey Press, 1951), esp. pp. 30-67. Cf. the same author's *Studies in Iconology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1939), pp. 172-73.

² Erwin Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1953), I, pp. 3-20, 57-61, etc.

³ Otto Benesch, *The Art of the Renaissance in Northern Europe* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1947), pp. 124-43.

⁴ See R. Bultmann, *Gnosis*, trans. by J. R. Coates (London: A. and C. Black [1952], pp. 1-6, 15-18.

⁵ John of Salisbury, *Metaphysics*, Lib. I, cap. x, in *Patrologia Latina*, CXCIX, 837 B-C.

⁶ Eugenio Garin has reaffirmed the pre-eminence of dialogue as a literary form typical of the Renaissance in his *Medioevo e Rinascimento*, *Studi et ricerche* (Bari, 1954), II, 1; see André Chastel, *L'épître et le discours*, *BHR.*, XVI (1954), p. 381.

⁷ See Philotheus Boehner, O.F.M., *Medieval Logic* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1950); Joseph T. Clark, S.J., *Conventional Logic and Modern Logic: A Prelude to Transition*, with a preface by Willard Van Orman Quine (Woodstock, Maryland: Woodstock College Press for the American Catholic Philosophical Association, 1952); Ernest A. Moody, *Truth and Consequence in Medieval Logic* (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Co., 1953). Father Clark's work gives explanations of quantification in logic—see the index.

⁸ See Louis John Paetow, *The Arts Course at Medieval Universities* (Urbana Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1910); also Stephen d'Irsay, *Histoire des universités* (Paris: Auguste Piccard, 1933-35), vol. I, *passim*.

⁹ See H. Butterfield, *The Origins of Modern Science, 1300-1800* (London, G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., 1949), chap. V.

¹⁰ György Kepes, *Art and Science*, in *Explorations* (University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada), I (1953), p. 82.

¹¹ *Loc. cit.*

¹² Ernest Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, translated from the German [*Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter*, 1948] by Willard R. Trask, "Bollingen Series," XXXVI (New York: Pantheon Books, [1953], pp. 302-47.

¹³ See H. J. Chaytor, *From Script to Print*:

An Introduction to Medieval Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1945), pp. 13 ff.

¹⁴ See Walter J. Ong, S.J., *Historical Backgrounds of Elizabethan and Jacobean Punctuation Theory*, in *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, LIX (1944), pp. 349-60.

¹⁵ Father Peter Hoenen, S.J., reports on notions of analysis among Renaissance and more modern scholastics in his *De origine primorum principiorum scientiae, Gregorianum*, XIV (1933), pp. 153-84.

¹⁶ Some of these terms are discussed in John Herman Randall, *The Development of Scientific Method in the School of Padua*, in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, I (1940), pp. 177-206; R. I. Markus, *Method and Metaphysics: The Origins of Some Cartesian Presuppositions in the Philosophy of the Renaissance*, in *Dominican Studies*, II (1949), pp. 356-84; Walter J. Ong, S.J., *Peter Ramus and the Naming of Methodism*, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XIV (1953), pp. 235-48; etc.

¹⁷ Thus we find Juan de Celaya's *Expositio... in librum Predicabilium Porphyrii cum questionibus eiusdem secundum triplicem viam beati thomae, realium, et nominalium* (Paris, 1516—copy in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris), or the same author's *Expositio... in librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis, cum questionibus eiusdem secundum viam triplicem beati Thomae, realium, et nominalium, novissime... revisa...* (Paris, 1520—copy in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris). The use of *opinio* for what today would be called "a philosophy" is very common, and it connected with classical usage. Thus one finds "Expositio magistri Georgii... nominalium opinionum recitatoris...", fol 1 in *Interpretatio Georgii Bruxellensis in Summulas Petri Hispani...* (Paris, 1946—copy in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris). For other similar instances of the term, see the list of titles in Joseph P. Mullally, *The Summulae logicales of Peter of Spain* (Notre Dame, Indiana: Publications in Mediaeval Studies, 1945), pp. 145 ff.

¹⁸ See Markus, *op. cit.*; Randall, *op. cit.*

¹⁹ A complete check list of the Ramist disputes is given in the *Ramus and Talon Inventory* which I have just completed and which gives the nearly eight hundred editions (some 1100 separately printed titles) of the works of Peter Ramus and his literary lieutenant Omer Talon, with locations of copies in European and American libraries. This inventory is scheduled for publication in the autumn of 1957 by Harvard University Press together with *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue*, which is spoken of above and to which the inventory will form a companion volume.

²⁰ See George Henry Forder, *The Foundations of Euclidean Geometry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1927).

²¹ J. H. Alsted (Alstedius), *Cursus philosophici encyclopaedia libris xxvii complectens universae philosophiae methodum serie praeceptorum regularum...* (Herborn, 1620); *Encyclopaedia septem tomis distincta...* (Herborn, 1630); etc. Someone among his contemporaries discovered that an anagram of Alstedius is *sedulitas*. This might be called a very modest anagram.

²² "Philosophia est comprehensio disciplinarum liberalium inferiorum: et alias dicitur encyclopaedia... Comprehensio illa spectatur in mente ut habitus, extra mentem ut systema." —Alsted, *Cursus philosophici encyclopaedia* (Herborn, 1620), p. 2.

²³ Early instances of the appearance of the term "metaphysical system" are: Rudolph Göckel (Goclenius) the elder (1547-1628), *Isagoge in peripateticorum et scholasticorum primam philosophiam, quae vulgo dicitur metaphysica, cum alio novo systemate metaphysico [Magistri] Constantini Cnirimii...* (Frankfort-on-the-Main, 1612, copy in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris); Clemens Templer (Templerus), *Metaphysicae systema methodicum... per theoremata et problemata selecta concinnatum* [with note and scholia supplied by Göckel] (Hanau, 1616, copy in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris). In devising systems, Ramists or circles where Ramists predominated, such as that at Frankfort and Hanau, were in the lead.

THE COLLABORATION OF VISION IN THE POETIC ACT:

*Its establishment of the religious dimension**

NATHAN A. SCOTT, JR.

*Rhythm and ideation, song and vision,
collaborate in the poetic act....*

—Philip Wheelwright.

Vision is perhaps the poet's morality.

—Wallace Fowlie.

WE ARE GATHERED HERE in these morning sessions of the Institute to reflect upon what are considered to be some of the major "peripheries of literature," and it is my task to suggest a perspective upon the religious periphery of literary art. I feel it, of course, to be a considerable honor to have been asked to come out of the theological community in which I hold my academic residence to appear before so distinguished a group of literary scholars as the English Institute has for many years been. And, this being the case, I cannot but also feel it to be something of an impropriety for me to begin my remarks, as I must, by suggesting that the

inclusion of my topic under our larger subject represents what is, I fear, a misconstruction of fundamental issues. But this, nevertheless, is the point at which I should like to begin, and what I want, indeed, to propose is that the notion that the issues of religion are peripheral to the main issues that face the student of literature is itself a notion that reflects a situation of crisis in contemporary criticism. The crisis that I have in mind is one that arises out of what is central and decisive in the doctrines of modern poetics, and it is a crisis that was given a kind of desperate announcement a few years ago when Mr. Allen Tate bluntly raised the question which it is a peculiarity of our generation to be anxious about—namely, "is literary criticism possible?"¹

It would not, of course, at first appear that the man of letters in our time feels himself to be at such an extremity, for one of the patron saints of the modern movement has assured us that the contemporary critic is "among the most presentable instances of modern man" and that in depth and precision his work is

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* This essay (under the title "Religion and Literature"), in a somewhat briefer version, was read before the English Institute at Columbia University in September of 1956, in the section of the Institute devoted to "Peripheries of Literature." The other papers that formed the context for this essay dealt with the biographical, the psychological, and the philosophical "peripheries." In a still longer form this essay will also appear at a later time in the forthcoming symposium-volume *Theology and Literary Criticism*, being edited by my colleague Professor Preston Roberts of the University of Chicago.

"beyond all earlier criticism in our language." And on all sides today we are frequently given similar testimonies of how unparalleled in any previous age are the vigor and trenchancy of criticism in our own time. So, with a zeal that is itself certainly unparalleled in any previous time, the contemporary achievement is anthologized almost annually; and the editors of the journals in which it has gained expression frequently engage their colleagues in symposia the aim of which is to indicate the gains that have been made and the solid ground on which we may now take our stand. But in all this stock-taking I think we may sense a certain anxious uncertainty as to whether anything has been achieved at all and as to whether, in the presence of the great works of the past and of the modern period, we are yet able really to penetrate the ontological intransigence of the aesthetic fact. And it is just possible that, despite the actual impressiveness of the achievement of modern criticism, this anxiety is a consequence of the doctrine which it has promoted and which has had the ironical effect of calling into question the very possibility of criticism itself. Indeed, what I want to propose is that, if we will take thought again of the first principles by which we have undertaken in our time to reckon with the reality of literary art, we may be put in mind not only of what in part our present distresses in criticism derive from but also of what is problematic in our understanding of the religious dimensions of imaginative literature.

NOW WHEN we seek for the principal motives that underlie the general movement of criticism in our period, we cannot for long escape the recognition that, among them at least, has been the intention of many of its most disting-

uished representatives to offer some resistance to the reductionist tendency of modern scientism, particularly when it broaches upon those transactions with reality that are peculiar to the humanistic imagination. I can think of no single doctrine or emphasis that is subscribed to by all those writers who at one time or another have been held accountable for "the new criticism," but certainly by far a greater number of them are of a single mind in their apprehensiveness about the deeper cultural implications of the reigning positivism than they are on any other single point. And it has been their unwillingness to give their suffrage to the absolute hegemony of empirical science which has been a decisive influence upon their approach to the fundamental issues in theory of literature. Ours has, of course, been a time in which it has been generally supposed that the only responsible versions of experience that can be had are those afforded us by the empirical sciences and in which, therefore, the common impulse has been to trivialize the arts by regarding them, in Mr. Arthur Mizener's phrase, as a kind of "amiable insanity" which, at best, is to be tolerated for the sedative effect that it has upon the nervous system. But even this assignment hardly constitutes a satisfactory charter for the artist, since, in the ministry of health to the nervous system, he is not likely to compete successfully with our modern doctors of psychology. So, in the last analysis, our culture has been incapable of finding for the arts, and especially for literature, a valuable or an irreplaceable function. And the result has been that the major strategists of modern criticism have felt it incumbent upon themselves to revindicate the poetic enterprise by doing what the culture was unable to do—namely, by seeking

to define that unique and indispensable role in the human economy that is played by imaginative literature and that can be preempted by nothing else.

This contemporary effort to specify the nature of the autonomy which a work of literary art possesses has, of course, involved a careful analysis of what is special in the linguistic strategies of the poet. And the aim has been to establish that poetry is poetry and not another thing, for it has been recognized that in a culture as dominated by scientific procedure as is our own the common tendency is to hold all forms of discourse accountable to those critical canons that are really appropriate only to scientific modes of discourse—which, of course, then makes it possible for non-scientific modes of statement to be quickly dismissed on one pretext or another. So the tack that the contemporary movement in criticism has taken has been one that involves the denial that the poet is any sort of expositor at all. He is, we have been told, not an expositor, not a Platonist, not an allegorist, not a merchant in the business of ideas: on the contrary, he is a certain kind of technician, a certain kind of maker, who constructs out of language special sorts of things, such things as we call dramas and novels and poems. And, as the doctrine runs, what is distinctive about the language of imaginative literature is that, in contrast to the ordinary forms of expository discourse, it does not involve the reduction of words to the level of being merely conceptual signs. That is to say, it does not lead us beyond itself into some external realm of meaning; it is, rather, a language that is so thoroughly composed and that is so heavily charged with imaginative intensity that, unlike other forms of discourse, it is capable of capturing attention *intransitively* up-

on itself.² It is, indeed, the one form of discourse that, in its operations, manages to avoid any bifurcation between the thing or event and the words which refer to it. The language of poetry does not convey any rhetorical propositions about the issues of religion or politics or psychology or science; that is to say, it does not conduct the mind beyond itself to anything at all but rather leads us deeper and deeper into itself, in a process of exploration.

Our immunity from any compulsion to relate the language of the poem to an external reality has, in recent criticism, been understood in terms of the organic character of poetic structure. Which is to say that the contemporary critic has come to see poetic meaning not as a function of the relationships between the terms of the poem and some reality which is extrinsic to them but rather as a function of the interrelationships that knit the terms together into the total pattern that forms the unity of the work. Our way of stating this distinctive character of poetic language is to say that its terms function not ostensibly but reflexively, not semantically but syntactically—by which we mean that, unlike the situation that obtains in logical discourse in which the terms “retain their distinctive characters despite the relationship into which they have been brought,”³ in poetic discourse they lose their distinctive characters, as they fuse into one another and are modified by what Mr. Cleanth Brooks calls “the pressure of the context.”⁴ It is, indeed, this whole phenomenon to which Mr. Brooks has appropriately applied the term *irony*, a concept that he has insisted upon by way of emphatically remarking the radical extent to which the terms and “statements” of a literary work bear the pressure of the total context and have their meanings modified

by that context. And it will be remembered that in a brilliant passage in *The Well Wrought Urn* he suggests that they ought even to be read as if they were speeches in a drama, since, as he says, if they are to be justified at all, it will not be by virtue of their "scientific or historical or philosophical truth, but [they will, rather, be] justified in terms of a principle analogous to that of dramatic property."⁵

Now it is in terms of this organic character of poetic structure that our generation has come to understand the resistance of literary art to the discursive paraphrase. It does not yield a series of paraphrasable abstractions because no set of terms of which a poetic work is constituted refers to anything extrinsic to the work: they refer, rather, to the other terms to which they are related within the work. And thus the perception of the meaning of the work awaits not an act of comparison between the component terms and the external objects or events which they may be taken to symbolize but awaits, rather, an act of imaginative prehension that will focus upon "the entire pattern of internal reference . . . apprehended as a unity."⁶ The coherence of a work of imaginative literature is to be sought, in other words, not in any set of logically manageable propositions into which it may be paraphrased but rather in the living pattern of interrelated themes and "resolved stresses"⁷ that the work contains.

THERE IS, however, one inescapable fact that such a formulation of poetic meaning may at first appear to neglect, and it is the incorrigibly referential thrust that words do have. They like to function "ostensively": that is to say, they insist upon pointing to things: it makes no difference whether the things are actual or ideal: what counts is that

they are extrinsic to the words themselves, for the words are not happy unless they are performing a semantic function. And, this being their habit, it would seem that they would be intractable by the poetic purpose. But this problem is recognized by contemporary theorists who, indeed, have come to regard the poetic labor as involving in part an effort to deliver the word from its ordinary logical bonds and its inherent mediateness. As Mr. Ezra Pound once remarked, the poet "takes words ordinarily having conventional objective meanings, and by forcing them into a new and independent structure objectifies fresh meanings. . . . The function of the artist," said Mr. Pound, "is precisely the formulation of what has not found its way into language, i.e. any language, verbal, plastic or musical."⁸ And it is precisely this effort of the poet to perform not simply an act of denotation but the far more difficult act of evocation, of capturing and conveying the full, living body of the world and of objectifying fresh experience of it—it is precisely this effort that very often commits him to the daring project of liberating words from the logical form into which they conventionally fall, so that they may be free to enter into the characteristic structures of poetic form in which they are affected by, and in turn affect, the total context established by the work. This is why you do not discover the meaning of a poem by taking an inventory of the various terms of which it is constituted and then by adding up the various meanings which these terms have in conventional usage. And when contemporary criticism insists upon the foolishness of such a procedure, it does so because it is sensitive, perhaps above all else, to the marvellous violence of the action that is performed upon terms once they are

drawn up into the poetic process, so that each alters under the aspect of the other and enters relationships that are completely irreducible to logical form and gathers a quite new meaning from the role that it assumes in the total configuration. It is the mystery that Mr. T. S. Eliot had in mind when he remarked upon "that perpetual slight alteration of language, words perpetually juxtaposed in new and sudden combination," which takes place in poetry.

So we may say, then, by way of summary, that the redefinition in our time of the nature of literary art has led to the view that the given work exists in and through its language. What we have immediately before us is a patterned mosaic in language which is, in the phrase by which M. Denis de Rougemont speaks of the work of art in general, "a calculated trap for meditation"⁹—and as such it effectively insists that before it we perform an act of rapt and "intransitive attention." One might even say that for the modern sensibility the poetry in the poem resides "not [in] some intrinsic quality (beauty or truth) of the materials"¹⁰ with which the poet builds his poem but resides rather in the completeness of the unity or "composition" that he contrives out of the stuff of language. What we begin with, as Mr. Eliot has told us, is simply "excellent words in excellent arrangement."¹¹

Now this redefinition in modern criticism of "the mode of existence of a literary work of art" has in turn led to a redefinition of the creative process. For so rigorous has been the stress that has been put upon the autonomy of poetic language that language itself has often very nearly been regarded as the enabling cause of literary art. It is assumed that art is a virtue of the practical intellect and that the poet's vision

is not fully formed until it has been objectified in language. Indeed, the executive principle of the creative process is considered really to derive not from the poet's metaphysic or his special perspective upon the human story but rather from the medium to which his vision is submitted and by which it is controlled. It is regarded as a truism that whatever it is that the poet "says" about reality in a given work is something the content of which he was not himself in possession of until the completion of the work. For, as Mr. Murray Krieger has recently put it, "the poet's original idea for his work, no matter how clearly thought out and complete he thinks it is, undergoes such radical transformations as language goes creatively to work upon it that the finished poem, in its full internal relations, is far removed from what the author thought he had when he began."¹² The medium alone, in other words, objectifies the poet's materials and gives them their implications. This axiom of the contemporary movement in criticism is expressed with especial directness by Mr. R. P. Blackmur, when he remarks in his essay on Melville:

Words, and their intimate arrangements, must be the ultimate as well as the immediate source of every effect in the written or spoken arts. Words bring meaning to birth and themselves contained the meaning as an imminent possibility before the pangs of junction. To the individual artist the use of words is an adventure in discovery; the imagination is heuristic among the words it manipulates. The reality you labour desperately or luckily to put into your words . . . you will actually have found there, deeply ready and innately formed to give an objective being and specific idiom to what you knew and did not know that you knew.¹³

Whatever it is, in other words, that is in the completed work is there by vir-

tue of the language which controls the creative process and which produces the "new word" that Mr. Yvor Winters declares the authentic work of literary art to be. The poet does not have a version of the human situation to express, some imperious preoccupation to voice, or some difficult report to make: no, he has none of this: indeed, as Mr. Eliot tells us, there is no good reason for supposing that he does "any thinking on his own" at all, for it is not his business to think—not even poets as great as Dante and Shakespeare. No, all the writer need have is his medium, and, if he knows how to trust it and how to submit to it, it will do his work for him: it will, as Mr. Blackmur says, bring the "meaning to birth."

NOW, TO BE SURE, what I have offered thus far is patently an abridgment of the advanced poetics of our time, but perhaps this account is at least sufficiently complex to provide some indication of the sources of the crisis that I earlier remarked as having arisen in contemporary criticism. It is clear certainly that we are being asked by many of the most distinguished theorists of our day to regard the work of literary art as a linguistic artifact that exists in complete detachment from any other independently existent reality. The fully achieved work of art, as the argument runs, is a discrete and closed system of mutually inter-related terms: the organic character of the structure prevents the constituent terms from being atomistically wrenched out of their context and made to perform a simple referential function, and it also succeeds in so segregating the total structure from the circumambient world as to prevent its entering into any extramural affiliation. "A poem should not mean but be," says Mr. MacLeish, and thereby, in this famous line from his poem "Ars Poetica,"

he summarizes, with a beautiful concision, the mind of a generation.

But then, of course, if the work of literary art exists in complete isolation from all those contexts that lie beyond the one established by the work itself, if it neither points outward toward the world nor inward toward the poet's subjectivity, if it is wholly self-contained and cut off from the general world of meaning, why, then it would seem that nothing really can be said about it at all. And in this unpromising strait are we not all chargeable with "the heresy of paraphrase"? Mr. Mark Van Doren suggests in his book *The Noble Voice* that "Any great poet is in a sense beyond criticism for the simple reason that he has written a successful story," that "Criticism is most at home with failure," and that in the presence of the great success it must be "as dumb as the least instructed reader."¹⁴ This is, of course, hardly an inspiring conclusion for the practicing critic to reach; yet it is, in a way, the conclusion that has been enforced upon him by the new poetics of our period. For the curious irony that has arisen out of the contemporary movement in criticism is a result of the fact that, on the one hand, it has striven for a concept of literary art that would permit responsible discussion of it as art rather than as something else but, on the other hand, it has succeeded in so completely segregating art from everything else that, in its presence, it has condemned itself, at least in principle, to silence. And this is, I believe, the reason for the noticeable anxiety in the critical forums today about whether anything has really been achieved at all. Much has been achieved, of course, in the establishment of a fund of substantiated judgments about literary texts, but the point is that this achievement has had no sanction in the

body of principle to which our generation has come to subscribe, for that body of doctrine has tended ultimately to represent the aesthetic fact as unavailable for critical discussion. And thus it should perhaps, after all, not be surprising that the same distinguished critic who some years ago told us that the contemporary achievement surpassed "all earlier criticism in our language" is, in a more recent essay, to be found wondering why it is that critics don't go mad; and one of his equally distinguished friends often ruminates upon the "burden" that he and his colleagues in criticism today must bear.

The distresses and distempers that lead our most sensitive practical critics today to reflect upon the inhumanly difficult nature of their labors are, in other words, a result of their betrayal by the inadequate concept of literature that has descended to them from the main strategists in modern theory. There are many points at which this concept might now be put under some pressure, but that upon which I want to focus on this present occasion is the understanding of the creative process that has been promoted in our time, for here, I think, we may get as good a purchase as any other upon our present dilemmas. And when this aspect of modern theory is examined it becomes evident to how great a degree its legislation about the nature of the poetic object has determined its understanding of the process by which that object is made. What it has wanted to insist upon is the indissoluble unity of form and content in the work which gives it the kind of autonomy that prevents its being translated into any other mode of statement. And this concern has in turn led contemporary theorists to minimize the controlling effect upon the creative process of the writer's ideas and beliefs. For it has been supposed

that were any great tribute to be paid to these factors we should be quickly on the way towards reinstating the heresy of didacticism, with its notion that the literary work is merely a rhetorical communication of independently formulable ideas. So great stress has been put upon the directive role of the medium in the creative process, and we have been reminded of how radical must be the transformations of the poet's ideas, once these ideas undergo the modifications necessitated by the exigencies of a developing linguistic structure. What we are asked to understand is that nothing really exists in imaginative literature, except as it is organized by the medium which is language. Indeed, whatever does exist is itself created by the language, for, as Mr. I. A. Richards says, it is the "means of that growth which is the mind's endless endeavour to order itself"¹⁵—or, as Mr. Blackmur puts it in the passage which was quoted earlier, "Words bring meaning to birth and themselves contained the meaning as an imminent possibility before the pangs of junction." The medium, in other words, is a kind of intelligent agency which in some mysterious way puppetizes the poet and does the job for which, in its innocence, common-sense has traditionally held him responsible.

I am aware, of course, that at this point I am to some extent exaggerating the contemporary testimony, but its own exaggerations in this matter are, I think, sufficiently great to make my characterization intelligible. In any event I am reassured by the coincidence that I discover between my own reaction and that of the English critic Mr. D. S. Savage, who suggests in the Preface to his book *The Withered Branch* that this "dizzy elevation" of the medium in contemporary criticism clearly leaves something important out of account.¹⁶ And

there is, I believe, no finer recent statement of what is unaccounted for than that which M. Jacques Maritain gives us in his great book *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*.¹⁷

In this book which grew out of his Mellon lectures that were given during 1952 in the National Gallery in Washington M. Maritain brings to a point of culmination nearly forty years of study in the arts and in aesthetics. And in one of its aspects the book has it as a major concern to call into question the modern notion that the creative process in art is merely an *operational* process and that the artist is merely a special sort of technician. "As to the great artists," he says, "who take pleasure in describing themselves as mere engineers in the manufacturing of an artifact of words or sounds, as Paul Valéry did, and as Stravinsky does, I think that they purposely do not tell the truth, at least completely. In reality the spiritual content of a creative intuition, with the poetic or melodic sense it conveys, animates their artifact, despite their grudge against inspiration."¹⁸ And this must be so, because, as M. Maritain insists, the activity which produces poetic art does not begin until the poet permits himself to be invaded by the reality of "Things" and until he himself seeks to invade the deepest recesses of his own subjectivity—the two movements of the spirit being performed together, as though one, "in a moment of effective union." When the soul thus comes into profound spiritual contact with itself and when it also enters into the silent and mysterious depths of Being, it is brought back to "the single root" of its powers, "where the entire subjectivity is, as it were, gathered in a state of expectation and virtual creativity."¹⁹ And the whole experience becomes "a state of obscure... and sapid knowing."²⁰ Then,

after the silent gathering a breath arises, coming not from the outside, but from the center of the soul—sometimes a breath which is almost imperceptible, but compelling and powerful, through which everything is given in easiness and happy expansion; sometimes a gale bursting all of a sudden, through which everything is given in violence and rapture; sometimes the gift of the beginning of a song; sometimes an outburst of unstoppable words.²¹

And only when this point in the artistic process has been reached may *operation* begin. For the artist to initiate the processes of *operation* at any earlier point is for him "to put the instrumental and secondary before the principal and primary, and to search for an escape through the discovery of a new external approach and new technical revolutions, instead of passing first through the creative source..."¹² Then, what is produced is but "a corpse of a work of art—a product of academicism."²³ "If creative intuition is lacking," he says, "a work can be perfectly made, and it is nothing; the artist has nothing to say. If creative intuition is present, and passes, to some extent, into the work, the work exists and speaks to us, even if it is imperfectly made and proceeds from a man who has the habit of art and a hand which shakes."²⁴

At "the single root" of the poetic process, then, there is a profound act of creative intuition. And in this cognitive act, says M. Maritain, the soul "suffers things more than it learns them," experiencing them "through resonance in subjectivity." The thing that is cognitively grasped is simply "some complex of concrete and individual reality, seized in the violence of its sudden self-assertion and in the total unicity"²⁵ that is constituted by "all the other realities which echo in this existent, and which it conveys in the manner of a sign."²⁶

And it is the richness of this imaginative prehension that gives life and power to the mathematic of poetic form.

M. Maritain is, of course, a good Thomist, and he does not therefore need to be reminded that art is "a virtue of the practical intellect" and that it requires "all the logic and shrewdness, self-restraint and self-possession of working intelligence."²⁷ Indeed, he insists upon the essential relationship between art and reason, since it is reason that discovers the necessities in the nature of the medium that must be observed in order for the work to be brought into existence. But he also insists that the reason and the calculation that are in the poet "are there only to handle fire,"²⁸ and that to grant them anything more than this purely instrumental function, simply for the sake of adherence to a puritanical formalism and a spurious austerity, is to be guilty of a gratuitous dogmatism.

Now many of us will doubtless find it difficult to accept M. Maritain's argument in this book in its entirety, for there are phases of his psychology—particularly those that bear upon his doctrine of the spiritual preconscious—that will surely strike us as exceedingly cumbersome and perhaps even obscurantist. And I have adduced his testimony here not because it perfectly answers all of the questions that he raises. But, at a time when it is too much our habit to regard the medium as the single factor controlling the poetic process, M. Maritain's formulation of the problem has the very great merit of eloquently reminding us again of the actual primacy in the process of *poetic vision*. He discloses to us, that is, a strategem for declaring once again that it is not language which brings "meaning to birth" and which enables the mind "to order itself"—not language, but *vision*.

Mr. Eliseo Vivas also helps us to some extent, I believe, with our difficulties, when he reminds us that what is in part distinctive about the artist is his "passion for order."²⁹ "Really, universally," said Henry James, "relations stop nowhere, and the exquisite problem of the artist is eternally but to draw, by a geometry of his own, the circle within which they shall happily *appear* to do so."³⁰ That is to say, the artist wants to give a shape and a significance to what Mr. Vivas calls "the primary data of experience." He wants to contain the rich plenitude of experience within a pattern that will illumine and give meaning to its multifarious detail and its bewildering contingency. But, of course, he cannot discover such a pattern unless he has a vantage-point from which to view experience and by means of which his insights may be given order and proportion. Which is to say that he can transmute the viscous stuff of existential reality into the order of significant form only in accordance with what are his most fundamental beliefs about what is radically significant in life, and these beliefs he will have arrived at as a result of all the dealings that he has had with the religious and philosophical and moral and social issues that the adventure of living has brought his way. The imaginative writer's beliefs, to be sure, are very rarely highly "propositional" in character: they do not generally involve a highly schematized set of ideas or a fully integrated philosophic system. He customarily has something much less abstract—namely, a number of sharp and deeply felt insights into the meaning of the human story that control all his transactions with the world that lies before him. And it is by means of these insights that he discovers "the figure in the carpet."

Mr. Graham Greene, in his criticism,

has often liked to observe that "Every creative writer worth our consideration, every writer who can be called in the wide eighteenth-century use of the term a poet, is a victim: a man given to an obsession,"³¹ or to what he sometimes calls a "ruling passion." And I take it that when he speaks in this way he has in mind the poet's habit of loyalty to some way of seeing things, by means of which he grapples and comes to terms with the tumultuous and fragmentary world that presses in upon him. That is to say, I assume that Mr. Greene has in mind the act of consent which the poet gives to some fundamental hypothesis about the nature of existence which itself in turn introduces structure and coherence for him into the formless stuff of life itself. And it is, indeed, I believe, this act that constitutes the real beginning of the poetic process: the rest is simply a matter of the kind of knowledgeable experimentation within the limits of his medium that the expert craftsman engages in till he discovers what he wants to say gaining incarnation within a given form.

Now I am aware that I must appear to be advocating a view of the poetic process which, in point of fact, I do not hold at all. That is to say, in much that I have just now said it may have seemed that I was implying that, before even initiating the purely literary task, it is necessary for the poet to do an enormous amount of thinking. I have attributed to the writer's metaphysic or his beliefs a decisive role in the creative process, and thus it would seem that I am saying that it is necessary for the writer to engage in a great deal of abstract thinking, before that process can even be initiated. But this I do not think is true at all. I do not, of course, want to associate myself with that tendency in modern literary theory which

supports the supposition that the writer is not a thinker at all. This is a notion which Mr. T. S. Eliot has, I suppose, done more than anyone else to foster, and it is simply another instance of the confusion which his criticism, great as it is, occasionally contains. In his famous essay on "Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca" he tells us, for example, that the poet does not "think" but that he makes poetry out of thought and that, therefore, he cannot *as poet* be said to "believe" in the system of thought that lies behind his poetry. In the particular case with which he is dealing, he tells us that Shakespeare did not really "think," that he simply took the muddled and incompatible ideas of Seneca and Machiavelli and Montaigne and made poetry out of them. And Mr. Eliot having—and properly so—the enormous prestige in our time that he has, it is not surprising that our generation should have become for a time so convinced that Shakespeare was not a profound thinker, if he was a thinker at all, that he merely assimilated and felicitously re-expressed well-worn truisms. Or, again, in the case of Dante, he tells us that Dante did not "think" either, that he simply took the magnificent formulations of St. Thomas and used them as the foundation of his poem. But surely there is a great confusion here, for, as Fr. Martin Jarrett-Kerr has remarked, "If... we start from the initial conviction that one of the first marks of the major poet or novelist is the possession of a *fine mind*, we must refuse to concede that Shakespeare or Dante did not think but had their thinking done for them."³²

Mr. Eliot's error here results, I suspect, from the supposition that to acknowledge the poet as a thinker is in effect to say that the poetic process originates in a highly developed *system* of

ideas, and this is, of course, not at all the case. What I have been calling the writer's "beliefs" are rarely if ever the highly "propositional" things that Mr. Eliot, in denying them the importance which I have given them, seems to think they are. For what the writer generally has is not a *system* of belief but rather an *imagination* of what is radically significant.

So, in insisting upon the writer's necessary dependence upon his beliefs, I am not at all intending to suggest that the poet or the novelist must, first of all, be a philosopher—though, on the other hand, I am not at all in accord with Mr. Eliot's contention that the poet is not really a thinker at all, a contention which is, by the way, significantly contradicted by Mr. Eliot's own career in poetry. There is a discussion somewhere in *St. Thomas* which illuminates, I think, the nature of the poet's relation to his beliefs. *St. Thomas* distinguishes between *cognitio per modum cognitionis*—knowledge, that is, in the manner of or by means of the intelligence or the discursive reason—and *cognitio per modum inclinationis*, knowledge, that is, in the manner of or by means of inclination. And what I would suggest is that the poet holds his "first principles" or his beliefs or his metaphysic *per modum inclinationis*—that is, inclinatively. Which is to say that his beliefs point in the direction of a coherent philosophy of life towards which his sensibility has an irresistible inclination and in which it finds its necessary sanction. The contrast between the two modes of cognition is, to be sure, not an absolute contrast, and what it is therefore proper to say is that it is the *tendency* of the poet to hold his beliefs *per modum inclinationis*, though there are some writers, Mr. Eliot among them, who also hold their beliefs *per modum cognitionis*. But in what-

ever manner they may be held in the individual case, what I am now insisting upon principally is the precedence and the primacy of the act by which the poet searches experience and finds therein an ultimate concern that gives him then a perspective upon the flux and the flow.

Now whatever it is that concerns the poet ultimately, that constitutes his "ruling passion" and the substance of his *vision*, is something to which the critic can be attentive only as it is discoverable in the work. By now surely we have all taken to heart the lesson of Messrs. Wimsatt and Beardsley on "The Intentional Fallacy," and we understand the irrelevance of any essay in literary criticism that is based upon some process of armchair-psychoanalysis which seeks to elevate the biographical category of the artist's conscious intention into a category of aesthetic discrimination. But the designation of "intentionalism" as fallacious becomes itself a fallacy, if it is made to support the view that a work of literary art is "a merely formal structure devoid of embodied meanings and values."³³ For such aesthetic objects, though "they may be found in the realm of pure design or pure music,"³⁴ simply do not exist in the realm of literature where surely a main part of the critic's task involves the discovery of "the actual operative intention which, as telic cause, accounts for the finished work"³⁵ and which can be defined only in terms of the vision of the world which it serves. The work of art, says M. de Rougemont, is a trap for the attention, but he also says that it is an "oriented trap." That is to say, the authentic work of literary art is a "trap," in the sense that, having the kind of autonomy that modern criticism has claimed for it, it "has for its specific function . . . the magnetizing of the sensibility, the fascinat-

ing of the meditation,"³⁶: as Mr. Vivas would put it, it can command upon itself an act of "intransitive attention." But the trap is "oriented": it *focuses* the attention, that is, upon something which transcends the verbal structure itself, in those of its aspects that have claimed the poet's concern. And thus it is that the autonomy of the work is no more an absolute thing than is the intransitivity of the reader's attention, for both are qualified by the implicative relations that branch out indefinitely from the aesthetic fact towards the world by which that fact is surrounded.

Here it is, then, that we may discover the point of entry into the literary work that we have. For it is analysis of the sort that we have been conducting that reveals that the work is not a closed system and that it does not have that quality of "aseity" which Scholastic theologians have considered the Godhead to possess, by reason of the self-derived and eternally independent character of its being. The work is not wholly self-contained and utterly cut off from the reader, because, in the creative process, the aesthetic intentions of the artist are not segregated from all that most vitally concerns him as a human being but are, on the contrary, formed by these concerns and are thus empowered to orient the work towards the common human experience. Imaginative literature does not speak about this experience, of course, in the way that science speaks of it: it does not give us propositions about it: the poet does not generally force upon us interpretations of it: "Poetry is not interpretation," as Mr. Archibald MacLeish has remarked in a recent essay.³⁷ The poet is distinguished not by his skill in expounding a thesis but rather by his skill in *rendering* the human story, in *dramatizing* it, in

making it *concrete* before the gaze of the mind. He makes us *look* at the living body of the world, and the meaning of what we look at appears to be quite indistinct from the form in which it is presented to us—so much so, indeed, that, in describing the mode of poetry's existence, we feel compelled to use such language as modern criticism has made familiar and to speak of its "autonomy."

But to stress the fact that poetic art signifies *by means of its structure* need not, I think, commit us to a formalism so purist as to require the view that the autonomy of the work is absolute. For, as I have been insisting, great literature does, in point of fact, always open toward the world, and that which keeps the universe of poetry from being hermetically sealed off from the universe of man is the poet's vision that it incarnates, of spaces and horizons, of cities and men, of time and eternity. This is why those modern theorists who tell us that the literary work is merely a verbal structure and that its analysis therefore involves merely a study of grammar and syntax—this is why they so completely miss the mark. They forget that writers use language with reference to what they know and feel and believe and that we can therefore understand their poems and novels only if we have what they know and feel and believe have operated in enriching the meaning of the words that they employ. The "poem-in-itself," in other words, as merely a structure of language, is simply a naked abstraction, for the real poem, the real novel, is something that we begin to appropriate only as we seek some knowledge of the context of belief and the quality of vision out of which it springs and with reference to which the words on the printed page have their fullest and richest meaning.

NOW WE HAVE, I think, arrived at the point in our argument at which it is finally possible for me to turn immediately to the generality of the subject which I was assigned. For what I can now say is that the aspect of poetic art to which I have been referring by the terms *vision* and *belief* is precisely the elements which we ought to regard as constituting the religious dimension of imaginative literature. When I speak of the religious dimension of literary art, in other words, I do not have in mind any special iconical materials stemming from a tradition of orthodoxy which may or may not appear in a given work. For were it to be so conceived, it might indeed then be something peripheral and inorganic to the nature of literature itself; whereas the way of regarding our problem that I now want to recommend is one that involves the proposal that the religious dimension is something intrinsic to and constitutive of the nature of literature as such. And I am here guided in my understanding of what is religious in the orders of cultural expression by the conception of the matter that has been so ably advanced by the distinguished Protestant theologian Professor Paul Tillich. In all the work that he has done in the philosophy of culture over the past thirty years the persistent strain that is to be noted is one that arises out of his insistence upon what might be called the co-inherence of religion and culture. He likes to say that "Religion is the substance of culture and culture the form of religion."³⁸ He has remarked, for example:

If any one, being impressed by the mosaics of Ravenna or the ceiling paintings of the Sistine Chapel, or by the portraits of the older Rembrandt, should be asked whether his experience was religious or cultural, he would find the answer difficult. Perhaps it would be correct to say

that his experience was cultural as to form, and religious as to substance. It is cultural because it is not attached to a specific ritual-activity; and religious, because it evokes questioning as to the Absolute or the limits of human existence. This is equally true of painting, of music and poetry, of philosophy and science. . . . Wherever human existence in thought or action becomes a subject of doubts and questions, wherever unconditioned meaning becomes visible in works which only have conditioned meaning in themselves, there culture is religious.³⁹

And Professor Tillich has acknowledged that it is to the theoretical comprehension of this "mutual immanence of religion and culture" that his philosophy of religion is primarily dedicated. "No cultural creation," he says, "can hide its religious ground,"⁴⁰ and its religious ground is formed by the "ultimate concern" to which it bears witness, for that, he insists, is what religion is: it "is ultimate concern."⁴¹ And since it is religion, in this sense, that is truly substantive in the various symbolic expressions of a culture, the task of criticism, in whatever medium it may be conducted, is, at bottom, that of deciphering the given work at hand in such a way as to reveal the ultimate concern which it implies. For, as he says, in the depth of every cultural creation "there is an ultimate . . . and [an] all-determining concern, something absolutely serious,"⁴² even if it is expressed in what are conventionally regarded as secular terms.

It should, of course, be said that, in these definitions, Professor Tillich is not seeking to *identify* religion and culture; but he does want to avoid the error that Mr. T. S. Eliot has cautioned us against, "of regarding religion and culture as two separate things between which there is a *relation*."⁴³ For what he recognizes is that the whole cultural process by which man expresses and

realizes his rational humanity is actually governed by what are his most ultimate concerns—his concerns, that is, "with the meaning of life and with all the forces that threaten or support that meaning..."⁴⁴ And, in passing, it is, I think, worth remarking that it is this profoundly realistic approach to the problem of cultural interpretation that enables Professor Tillich to see that in our own period the most radically religious movements in literature and painting and music may gain expression in strangely uncanonical terms—in despairing maledictions and in apocalyptic visions of "the abyss" of disintegration that threatens the world today. For, as he would say, in the very profundity with which *Wozzeck* and the *Guernica* and *The Waste Land* express the disorder of the times there is an equally profound witness to the spiritual order that has been lost, so that these great expressions of the modern movement in art are rather like a confused and uncertain prayer that corresponds to the second petition of the *Our Father*.⁴⁵

We are now, then, brought to the point at which we must re-gather our bearings by a final act of recapitulation. We have said that the work of literary art is a special sort of linguistic structure that traps the attention intransitively; but we have also argued that the intransitivity of the reader's attention is not absolute, since the autonomy of the object which captures his attention is not itself absolute. The literary work is a trap, but it is a trap that is *oriented* toward the world of existence that transcends the work—and the work is *oriented* by the *vision*, by the *belief*, by the *ultimate concern* of which it is an incarnation: its *orientation*, that is to say, is essentially religious. And this is why criticism itself must, in the end, be theological. The prevailing orthodoxy in

contemporary criticism, to be sure, generally represents hostility toward the idea of metaphysical and theological considerations being introduced into the order of critical discourse. But, as Mr. Leslie Fiedler has remarked:

The "pure" literary critic, who pretends, in the cant phrase, to stay "inside" a work all of whose metaphors and meanings are pressing outward, is only half-aware. And half-aware, he deceives; for he cannot help smuggling unexamined moral and metaphysical judgments into his "close analyses," any more than the "pure" literary historian can help bootlegging unconfessed aesthetic estimates into his chronicles. Literary criticism is always becoming "something else," for the simple reason that literature is always "something else."⁴⁶

Our abdication from the reigning poetics of our time is, however, only partial, for the religious dimension of literature, as we have defined it, must be regarded as something which, in so far as it is really a datum for critical inspection and assessment, exists in the language of the work. For the only thing that lies before the critic is a composition in language, and, after all, it is, presumably, his skill in the supervision of language that *primarily* distinguishes the literary artist: surely it would be wrongheaded to assume that the thing that makes him an artist is the profundity or the novelty of his vision: no, he makes good his vocational claim in the republic of letters by the extent of the success with which he shapes the substance of experience, in accordance with his vision of what it is that makes it ultimately meaningful. And he can give a significant form or shape to experience only in so far as he takes the highest kind of advantage of the medium in which his art is wrought. So it may, then, I think, be taken for granted that whatever it is that *orients* a work

of literary art or that constitutes the *ultimate concern* that it embodies is something that will disclose itself in the ways in which the writer brings the resources of language into the service of his project. And thus we shall want very carefully to preserve all that has been gained in modern criticism as a result of its methodological researches into the problem of how the language of imaginative literature is to be understood and talked about. For the critic to insist upon remaining merely a kind of grammarian is for him to forego many of the most interesting and significant discriminations that literary criticism can make. For, though the literary work is a special sort of linguistic structure, that which holds the highest interest for us is the special seizure of reality towards which this structure is instrumental. It is, in other words, the nature of literature itself that compels the critic finally to move beyond the level of verbal analysis to the level of metaphysical and theological valuation. On this level, of course, he can establish the propriety of his judgments only by reference to his own insight, his own scale of values, his own sense of what is important in art and in life. And, as the English critic, Mr. S. L. Bethell, has remarked,

if he is a Christian worthy of the name, his whole outlook will be coloured by his religion; he will see life in Christian terms, and, though he may ignore an atheist writer's professed atheism, he will still judge his degree of insight into character by his own insight, which will have been formed in part by his Christian experience. And the non-Christian critic—let us be clear about this—will also judge a writer's insight into character (or into anything else, of course) by the standard of his own insight, however derived. There is no "impartial criticism" in this sense, or rather there is no critical neutrality; there are only Christian critics and Marxist critics and Moslem critics—and

critics who think themselves disinterested but who are really swayed unconsciously by the beliefs they have necessarily acquired by being members of a particular society in a particular place and time.⁴⁷

And, as Mr. Bethell observes with great shrewdness,

the last are really the least impartial, for, believing themselves impartial, they are open to every unconscious influence upon their judgment, while the "doctrinaire" critic may keep his doctrine well in view and, if not entirely avoiding prejudice, may at least give his readers fair warning of what to expect.⁴⁸

But now my reader at this point may well want to raise the question as to whether my use of these quotations from Mr. Bethell is calculated to suggest that we are justified in trying to guarantee literary art by the quality of belief that it possesses. And, were the question to be put to me, my impulse, as a Christian, would, I think, be to say, with Mr. Roy W. Battenhouse, that "the good poet should be able, like Adam in the Garden, to name every creature correctly. Apprehending the form of each thing that is brought before him, he should be able to assign it its proper place."⁴⁹ But, of course, this capacity, which so influentially determines the outcome of the artistic process, is itself very largely dependent upon the artist's metaphysical or religious orientation—so that, as a Christian, I should again feel prompted to say, with Mr. Battenhouse, that

if it is true that the light with which an artist sees inclines to affect the justness of his observations, the presence of full light cannot but clarify the issues of proportion and order. With inadequate lighting, the artist will not see certain things he ought to see; it will be all too easy for him to draw disproportionately what he does see. To put it another way the artist who takes up his location in

Plato's cave has not the same chance as he who sets up shop by Christ's open tomb.⁵⁰

In principle, I should, in other words, expect the Christian reader at least—all other things being equal—more enthusiastically to give his suffrage to a literature that was Christianly oriented than to one which was not. But, now, not as a matter of principle but as a matter of fact, the Christian reader lives in a period whose characteristic quality, at least ever since the Renaissance, has been defined, as Mr. Erich Heller has reminded us, not merely by a dissociation of faith from knowledge but by what has been the profounder severance of faith from sensibility. "It is this rift," says Mr. Heller, "which has made it impossible for most Christians not to feel, or at least not to feel also as true many 'truths' which are incompatible with the truth of their faith."⁵¹ They have, in other words, been in very much the same position that the father of the possessed child was in whom the Synoptist records as having cried out: "Lord, I believe: help thou mine unbelief" (*The Gospel According to St. Mark* 9:24). And, this being the case, the Christian reader will actually respond to the various beliefs which literature may present with much the same latitudinarianism that any other sensitive reader in our time will bring to bear upon his dealings with literary art: that is to say, what he will principally require is that the view of life that is conveyed by the given poem or novel commend itself as a possible view, as one to which an intelligent and sensitive observer of the human scene might be led by a sober consideration of the facts of experience. And, though he will agree with Mr. Eliot that to judge a work of art by artistic standards and to judge it by religious standards ought to "come in the end to the same thing,"⁵² he will recog-

nize, as Mr. Eliot does, that, in our time, this is an end at which none of us is likely to arrive.

FOOTNOTES

¹ The reference is Mr. Tate's essay "Is Literary Criticism Possible?" which appears in his book *The Forlorn Demon* (Chicago: Regnery, 1953).

² Vide Eliseo Vivas, "A Definition of the Aesthetic Experience," in *The Problems of Aesthetics*, ed. Eliseo Vivas and Murray Krieger (New York: Rinehart & Co., 1953), pp. 406-411. It is to Mr. Vivas that we are indebted for the definition in contemporary aesthetics of the poetic experience in terms of "intransitive attention." This concept receives further elaboration in his book *Creation and Discovery* (New York: Noonday Press, 1955).

³ Ernst Cassirer, *Language and Myth*, trans. by Susanne K. Langer (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946), p. 91.

⁴ Cleanth Brooks, "Irony as a Principle of Structure," *Literary Opinion in America*, ed. by Morton Dauwen Zabel (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951), pp. 730-731.

⁵ Cleanth Brooks, *The Well Wrought Urn* (London: Dennis Dobson Ltd., 1949), p. 188.

⁶ Joseph Frank, "Spatial Form in Modern Literature," *Criticism: The Foundations of Modern Literary Judgment*, ed. by Mark Schorer et al. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1948), p. 383. Mr. Frank's essay contains some very acute observations upon the "reflexive" character of poetic language.

⁷ Cleanth Brooks, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

⁸ Ezra Pound, "Epstein, Beligion and Meaning," *The Criterion*, Vol. IX, No. XXXVI (April, 1930), p. 471.

⁹ Denis de Rougemont, "Religion and the Mission of the Artist," *Spiritual Problems in Contemporary Literature*, ed. Stanley R. Hopper (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952), p. 177.

¹⁰ Cleanth Brooks, *Modern Poetry and the Tradition* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1939), p. 43.

¹¹ T. S. Eliot, "Preface to the 1928 Edition," *The Sacred Wood* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1934, 4th ed.), pp. ix-x.

¹² Murray Krieger, *The New Apologists for Poetry* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1956), p. 23.

¹³ R. P. Blackmur, "The Craft of Herman Melville: A Putative Statement," *The Lion and the Honeycomb* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1955), p. 138.

¹⁴ Mark Van Doren, *The Noble Voice* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1946), pp. 181-182.

¹⁵ I. A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1936), p. 131.

¹⁶ D. S. Savage, *The Withered Branch* (New York: Pellegrini & Cudahy, n.d.), p. 12.

¹⁷ In the following account of this book that I give I have liberally raided two of the pages in an article of mine ("Maritain in His Role as Aesthete") that appeared in *The Review of Metaphysics* in March, 1955 (Vol. VIII, No. 3). I am indebted to the Editor for permitting this act of plunder.

¹⁸ Jacques Maritain, *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1953), p. 62.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 239.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 223.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 246.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

²⁹ Eliseo Vivas, *Creation and Discovery*, p. 117.

³⁰ Henry James, *The Art of the Novel: Critical Prefaces* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934), p. 5.

³¹ Graham Greene, *The Lost Childhood* (New York: The Viking Press, 1952), p. 79.

³² Martin Jarret-Kerr, *Studies in Literature and Belief* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955), p. 5.

³³ Eliseo Vivas, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

³⁶ Denis de Rougemont, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

³⁷ Archibald MacLeish, "The Language of Poetry," *The Unity of Knowledge*, ed. Lewis Leary (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1955), p. 230.

³⁸ Paul Tillich, *The Protestant Era* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948), p. 57.

³⁹ Paul Tillich, *The Interpretation of History* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), p. 49.

⁴⁰ *The Protestant Era*, p. 57.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 58-59.

⁴³ T. S. Eliot, *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1949), pp. 31-32.

⁴⁴ James Luther Adams, "Tillich's Concept of the Protestant Era," Editor's Appendix, *The Protestant Era*, p. 273.

⁴⁵ M. de Rougemont says that "art would appear to be like an invocation (more often than not unconscious) to the lost harmony, like a prayer (more often than not confused), corresponding to the second petition of the Lord's prayer—"Thy Kingdom come." *Vide op. cit.*, p. 186.

⁴⁶ Leslie Fiedler, "Toward an Amateur Criticism," *The Kenyon Review*, Vol. XII, No. 4 (Autumn, 1950), p. 564.

⁴⁷ S. L. Bethell, *Essays on Literary Criticism and the English Tradition* (London: Dennis Dobson Ltd., 1948), p. 24-25.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁴⁹ Roy W. Battenhouse, "The Relation of Theology to Literary Criticism," *The Journal of Bible and Religion*, Vol. XIII, No. 1 (February, 1945), p. 20.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ Erich Heller, *The Disinherited Mind: Essays in Modern German Literature and Thought* (Philadelphia: Dufour & Saifer, 1952), p. 125.

⁵² T. S. Eliot, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS AND MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

BRUNO DE JESUS-MARIE

"I HOLD St. JOHN of the Cross," declares Maritain (*The Degrees of Knowledge*, chapter 7, passim, Scribners), "the great Doctor of this supreme incommunicable knowledge." Thomas is the Doctor par excellence of the *speculatively* practical science of contemplation and union with God, St. John of the Cross is the Doctor par excellence of the *practically* practical science of contemplation and union with God. One is the "Doctor of the Light"; the other, "Doctor of the Night." The former explains and expounds, the latter guides and leads; St. Thomas focuses the full force of his intellectual power on Being, St. John of the Cross leads human freedom through the dark night of spiritual spoliation. Through his teaching mission, the one points out the way, the other puts wisdom into practice.

Maritain specifies further: "Two elements must be distinguished in the works of St. John of the Cross: his inspired poems, and the commentaries which he wrote upon them for our instruction. In his poems, written under divine inspiration, through limpid, lyrical sym-

bols, he recounts, in so far as human language may express the inexpressible—that is, very inadequately—the mystical experience which he has lived. Here his only thought is to sing. In his commentaries, written at the request of his spiritual daughters, he is expounding a doctrine, he teaches. This doctrine is formulated as a practical science, it proceeds by composing ideas which are soon to regulate concrete actions. In the writings of St. Theresa, who always refused to assume the role of teacher, but whose teaching the Church has glorified, there are a number of the descriptive and experimental elements of such a science. In the writings of St. John of the Cross this science is present, in all its dimensions, to such a degree that the theorist of sciences could find no more perfect example of a practical science. For, just as practically practical knowledge depends on speculatively practical knowledge, the practical science of contemplation depends on moral theology. And St. John of the Cross is not only a supreme contemplative, he is also a very good theologian: which is the reason why this practical science in his hands reaches its perfection."

"The yoga of St. John of the Cross," says Swami Siddheswarananda, "is not limited to *one* of the four systems—jñana, bhakti, karma and raja yoga—exclusively, rather he integrates all four in his own person. For this reason, his way may be called an "integral" yoga (or purna yoga, which is the term used by Sri Aurobindo). Of the Christian mystics to whom we can, in one way or another, apply the term 'yogi,' St. John of the Cross may be designated

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as the 'yogi par excellence' because in him alone are all the elements of the different yogas harmoniously blended together in the supremacy of the Christian faith." (*The Raja Yoga of St. John of the Cross*, a Study in Comparative Mysticism, given at a Conference at the Sorbonne, Gretz, 1951.)

As an introduction to a study of the problems posed by the direction of souls, we should like to compare the teaching of this "guide of the faithful soul seeking to attain to the most perfect life"—as it is expressed in the Bull making St. John of the Cross a Doctor of the Church—with our own modern psychology. Since the necessity of including the findings of modern psychology and psychiatry in any training in the art of spiritual direction has sometimes been questioned we will begin by summarizing the conclusions presented to the Congress of Spiritual Direction (Rome, 1950) by Reverend Father Gabriel de Saint Marie-Madeleine. We believe that if St. John of the Cross had lived in our time, he would have approved of them.

1. Spiritual direction is the science and art of leading souls to the perfection proper to each in the fulfillment of his own personal vocation. Good direction stays within the bounds of its supernatural purpose. It does not arrogantly try to solve temporal problems which are not within its competency, thereby lulling the penitent into a false security. No human aspect of the spiritual life can escape the influence of the Holy Spirit. However hard it is to distinguish in practice, the fine line of demarcation which separates the natural and supernatural means which are lawful to use in spiritual direction must be scrupulously safeguarded.

2. Spiritual direction in its fullness is properly part of the office of the priest,

who, as such, is the only one who can develop and utilize all its possibilities. The minister of the sacrament of penance can and should use it efficaciously. Experience has shown us that putting an interior conflict into words in the presence of another is an act of the highest psychological import. Powerful psychological forces are involved in the act of confession. The confessor must enlighten the penitent as to the real nature of his culpability, and show him how to distinguish this from false guilt feelings arising out of the unconscious. Where these are present, the reassurance of the penitent requires a maximum of tact and prudence. But if he understands the nature of unconscious guilt, sacramental absolution will eliminate of itself the qualms of conscience which a real fault arouses. However, one should not lose sight of the fact that: a) as far as the priest is concerned, spiritual direction is not necessarily limited to the confessional, and b) that spiritual direction may also be given and received in an authentic and fruitful manner outside the priesthood. The director is only an instrument of God in the guiding of souls along the path of Christian perfection, and as such he must be entirely unbiased, guarding himself carefully against the temptation to dominate the penitent. Normally, the vow of obedience to the director is to be strongly discouraged.

3. Spiritual direction requires a theological wisdom of which St. John of the Cross, Doctor of the Church, and St. Teresa, and St. Therese of the Child Jesus are among the most authoritative exponents; we therefore draw upon these sources. Spiritual direction does not operate primarily upon the plane of human prudence, but of theological faith and it should be put upon this essentially supernatural and transcen-

dental level so that it may not be cheapened in the eyes of either priest or penitent. In spite of the great advantages of spiritual direction, it cannot be universally imposed. The free choice of a director gives the penitent a certain responsibility; besides, it allows him to change advisors if he desires to do so.

4. The act of spiritual direction focalizes the actual attitude of an existent subject under well-defined conditions, and on the human plane is essentially a manifestation of prudence. On the one hand, it should probe into the deepest recesses of character and temperament so that the best possible understanding may be had of the penitent's personality, and on the other hand, should the penitent prove to be neurotic or psychotic, it may serve as a means of catharsis if the morbid elements repressed within the unconscious are ripe for abreaction. To become skillful in the art of such direction, none of the anthropological sciences, whether they be physical, physiological or psychological (conscious or unconscious, individual or collective), should be neglected in the training of the director. However, no general knowledge in these fields, no matter how exhaustive it may be, can take the place of qualified specialists in complex cases. For example, although psychoanalytical findings certainly show the psychological value of spiritual direction, direction should never be turned into psychoanalysis, for then the recovery of psychic health will be confused with advancement in the spiritual life, human techniques with the work of the Lord in the soul, natural confidence with theological faith. But it is not necessary to fall into either confusion or separatism; on the contrary, true insight into the self ought to be accompanied by a very strong theological hope.

If it is true that the second half of this century is to be "the age of psychology," as the venerable President of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences has called it, it is inevitable that from now on each specialist will be a kind of witness in his chosen scientific field. It is desirable, moreover, that even those who do not share our belief may do this without prejudice. Aside from anti-religious elements in the Freudian school, is it not just as admissible to accept "psychoanalysis" as "evolution"?

As Professor John Delay pointed out in his keynote address at the opening of the recent worldwide Congress of Psychiatry, "The interpretation of dreams, free association, and the analysis of unconsciously motivated acts, are techniques of incontestable value, even if the philosophy behind them is not wholly acceptable to everyone. The general theory of neurosis as a fixation at, or regression to, infantile stages in the development of the libido through repression is accepted practically everywhere as a fact of psychogenesis." To doubt this would show a lack of genuine scientific spirit. For example, it is our opinion that it will be the honest and well-qualified psychoanalyst (there are other kinds), in his attempt to explore the profundities of depth psychology, rather than the metaphysician or still less the theologian, who will open the door to the mystery of man. Instead of always sticking to the same old premises, the theologian might try to make a fresh start, utilizing the data furnished by psychology. A metaphysician might better consider these vital problems rather than harp on the difficulties which these problems create; if they are to be studied closely, they must be illuminated from above.

The works of St. John of the Cross are not addressed to those who need

only edification in order to be spiritually well-nourished. We detest masks, even though we realize that most people cannot live without them. All our strength is in the presence of God and of our own nature. What is there to do except to maintain one's psychic equilibrium and anchor oneself in theological hope? The study of St. John of the Cross is a must for anyone who wishes to achieve this. No director of souls can pay too much attention to the sensitivity of his own perception and the disposition of his own heart.

FROM THE TIME of his first apprenticeship, "clear-sighted and capable" though he was, St. John of the Cross continued to observe and learn. He tells us in his book that the artisan who wants to learn the "fine points" of a craft or art must "proceed in the dark." Thus the tailor discovers that when he is sewing leather, if he first draws through a stiff thread, the heavier thread may be pulled through much more easily. St. John is very critical of badly carved statues, for he cannot tolerate poor workmanship. Having been apprenticed to a tailor, a sculptor in wood and a painter, he also tried his hand at plastic art, carving images of Christ out of wood. Some time ago we received from the old Carmel of the Incarnation at Avila, the only art-work of his which we have, a crucifix drawn with a kind of Chinese ink. In a study devoted to this work in *Mystical Spain* (Paris: Arts et Métiers Graphiques), René Huyghe concludes that St. John of the Cross "did not follow any contemporary style, he was influenced only by the object of his contemplation." He "broke through the art of his time." He was first of all a contemplative and a mystic and that is why he could "visually project his inner vision with such striking originality."

A contemplative whom everyone accepts as a great symbolist poet, the saint, also enchanted by music, had a very austere childhood, especially after the awakening of his sensitive nature. However, neither poverty nor the hostile attitude of his father's family seemed to call out any bitterness either in him or his mother and elder brother. No recriminations in this family! We are told that Catalina was very charitable; she took into her home a child who had been abandoned at the door of the church, and reared him as one of the family. As to Francisco, he also took an interest in abandoned children and saw to it that they were taken care of. He loved poverty so much that he even requested it from the Lord. Thus, from his childhood, John of the Cross "lived" the Beatitudes of the Gospel. This pure man—and we shall see the quality of his purity later—this man of peace experienced tears and persecution, poverty and grace, and his family experienced them with him. "Put yourself into the lowest place, but aspire to the highest (spiritual) place," was the motto of his elder brother, a simple stone-mason. Knowing as we do now the supreme importance of early environment in the formation of a person, when we find parents who were not overcome by adversity because they themselves were completely mature, we can affirm that the education of John of the Cross was a success both spiritually and psychologically.

Let us examine the fruits of this upbringing. As part of his education in the humanities under the guidance of the Jesuit, Father Boniface, Juan de Yepes from his 14th to his 20th year was attached to St. Anthony's Hospital at Medina del Campo, a city famous at that time for its international fairs. It is said that he went about begging

alms for the care of the sick. Surely, St. Anthony's, called the "Pox hospital," located in a city whose vampirizing wealth (how he castigated it in his works!) created a moral degradation which in its turn engendered physical wretchedness, was a fit laboratory for the clinical training of St. John of the Cross. In 1556 and 1557, years during which a terrible febrile epidemic raged, according to the celebrated medical doctor Gomez Pereira, John observed and came to understand the misery of the human condition with a wisdom beyond his years. He had, says Fernandez de Bustillo who knew him as a child, "the sagacity of an old man." St. Theresa of Avila concurred in this opinion, for when he was only a young and newly ordained Carmelite, she circumvented his plans to join the Carthusians by promising to let him reform her Order, calling him her "little Seneca."

The "little Seneca" had a thirst, it is said, "for the greatest perfection and a solitary life" and for that reason he intended to forsake the world and plunge himself into God.

Is this a refusal of life, of the human condition? This seems the accusation of a critique of St. John of the Cross which appeared in a certain literary weekly in the autumn of 1947. The author knew of the saint only through Huysmans, who himself saw him only "at the end of his journey, when he was a terrible sight, dried up and withered away, a scandal to behold." After reading the works of the holy Doctor in an edition which contained neither biographical data nor the commentaries which are indispensable to a proper understanding of his thought (the Saint not having foreseen the publication of his works), this critic sees him "like the Faust of Valéry, standing on the roof of the world, frozen by the icy wind, under

a sky denuded of stars." "St. John of the Cross and the mystics of his school," declares this writer, "are not witnesses to divine love but to a fanaticism born of pride." John of the Cross had "betrayed his religion."

Like his Master Jesus Christ, St. John of the Cross is a scandal. The cross is destruction and madness, yet it beckons to us like an enchantress. What a temptation should we pay heed! Even when we turn away from it, it leaves a trace of itself in our souls, that uniquely fecundative urge which the world calls perversion or madness.

If St. John of the Cross were the terrible being which some people see him as, we would not hesitate to say that the Saint of Carmel was a neurotic, because a neurotic is a person who is incapable of giving or receiving love. But the graphologist, like the morpho-psychologist, asserts the contrary:

The handwriting of St. John of the Cross, slow, precise, with its firm pressure and shaded letters, formed with harmonious curves, shows a personality which concentrates on the task at hand, attentive to details, quickly discerning the essential, and with a capacity for love of a universality and profundity which is touching. All these gifts and powers seem to converge gently and surely and become fused in a full and confident outlook on life. This script shows a lively sensitivity to the manifestations of life on every plane of being. Its sensitiveness is both very penetrating and very discriminating, being warmly human as well as detached, vibrant, tender, impressionable. Sensibility and sentiment are so harmonious, rich and subtle that this man seems to have experienced everything, felt everything. This marvelous openness of heart, revealed in such a degree by no other handwriting, and the depths of understanding which it mirrors, is manifested in all his feelings without any irritation or bitterness. Such complete receptivity in a weaker na-

ture would very likely undermine the will or impair the judgment. However, in the script of St. John of the Cross, it is rather the indication of a clear-sightedness which would easily detect any degrading influence, a talent for doing the right thing at the right time, in short, as a kind of simple common sense which would instantly counteract any extravagant emotional flights. To see such ardor without aggressiveness, such enthusiasm without over-eagerness, while studying the revelatory sign which handwriting is, gives the graphologist much food for thought, because we have never before encountered such passion without the danger of self-destruction. There is also in this script an intuition of the mystery of life as the meeting place of time and eternity—it shows precision in action, but detachment in thought. These characteristics indicate a type of perseverance which might be taken for stubbornness, but the absence of a mechanical acceptance of routine is not compatible with such a judgment. When St. John of the Cross was adamant in some decision, it was because he knew the time had come to take a firm stand. It would be useless to try to study his mind apart from his intuition and his feelings. Refined, discriminative, it is subtle without being specious, enamored of truth and wedded to beauty. Very imaginative and artistic with a keen sense of harmony, its delicacy serves rather to extend the sphere of affectivity than to shine with a fascinating if fragile lustre of its own. What is especially striking in this handwriting is the great power of emancipated love which it shows. That modest and unguarded air, so full of serenity, that calm authority of an ambitionless being who is *existent* in the fullness of his own integrity, gives a rare and precious image of a perfection without vapidity.

Thank God, the Mystical Doctor—and we give you a good idea of him through this honest and perfectly objective analysis by Mme. Suzanne Bre-sard, which appeared in *Mystical Spain*

—was absolutely normal, the very opposite of an unconscious infantilism, not because he remained innocent, but because he consciously chose purity. He was, accordingly, capable of love, and indeed of extraordinary love.

Let us go into detail. If he told the young Carmelites of Beas to look on their loved ones "as strangers," it is not because he despised the family, but that he wanted to strengthen their courage in this phase of their spiritual life. He himself summoned his mother, his brother and his sister-in-law to keep house for him in Duruelo's hut, where he began the reform of his Order, and some years before he died, he kept his elder brother near him longer than he wished to stay.

We recall that St. John of the Cross was confirmed in grace at the time of his first Mass, but this did not make him impeccable, since the Apostles themselves were able to sin; only the first movement of this proclivity was restrained. As a matter of fact, John of the Cross was so sensitive that, in a moment of extreme weakness, he begged St. Teresa to intercede for him to Father Gratian, who was then Provincial, that he might be recalled to Castile, for he could not bear the Andalusians! This is not as arrogant as it seems; it is much better to cry and complain while climbing up the Himalayas of perfection than to lose one's humanity. That goes for family ties as well as love of one's native land.

On the other hand, if the Saint, speaking of the spiritual direction of religious, declares that "being gallant to women serves only to displace affection and does not result in spiritual growth (he confessed that God Himself had punished him for too much condescension in not letting him see one woman's very grave sin), don't try to sniff out

a complex in this supernatural attitude! He felt entirely at ease in the presence of the most audacious temptresses. One such conceived a passion for this 30-year-old monk and waylaid him in the little house which he occupied as confessor to the Carmelite nuns. That evening he was alone. He did not imitate St. Thomas Aquinas, and seize a firebrand in order to make his seductress retreat. Rather he talked to her with gentle kindness and the woman burst into tears and went quietly away. "The more holy a confessor is, the less you are able to shock him," John later remarked jokingly. Whether he was at an inn or in the home of seculars, his extraordinarily pure gaze was enough to foil a would-be adventuress. And he was never at a loss for a comeback. One time in Granada, near the Incarnation Convent, a woman came up to him and showed him a baby which she had in her arms, saying that since it belonged to him, he ought to take care of it. Since she refused to be ignored, he finally asked: "Who is this child's mother?" "A young girl in high society," she replied. "Where did this young lady live before coming to Granada?" he inquired further. "She was born in Granada and has never been a half-league outside its walls," was the reply. "And how old is this child?" "A little over a year." "Well," observed St. John of the Cross, "this is without doubt a miraculous child, the product of a very great miracle indeed, because it has been only a year since I came to Granada and I had never been here before in my life!" When he came back he laughingly related this incident to the other Carmelites.

We cite these incidents because they reveal not only moral but also biological stability. "It is better to die and rot in the grave than to sin." So it is, but John of the Cross had himself well in

hand, and he freely used his libido to reach the divine union, an extremely rare achievement. To be able to do this, he had to be truly united to God, truly free. His vibrant energy—psychologists would call it his sexuality—made his human contacts fruitful for the Lord. On the loom provided by his father and mother, between the threads forming the bountiful warp of his vitality, ceaselessly runs the woof—the supernatural threads of grace. And the fabric becomes as clear, as shining as a fine taffeta. Nothing is as splendid as this incarnation of the divine.

Here there is no anxiety, for here there is no counterfeiting. And John of the Cross could not be easily fooled. According to Professor Laignel-Lavastine, he was an "excellent clinician." He has often noticed, this same author says in regard to spiritual sensuality, "that different emotions have the same or similar reactions due to the small number of reflexes which our poor body has at its disposal. St. John of the Cross could not have known about the similarity of reaction of the pneumogastric and sacral erector nerves on the excitability of vagatonic subjects. But his clinical remarks have the highest value." (*La méthode concentrique dans l'étude des psychonévroses*, p. 134). This bears out numerous medical observations linking anxiety and sexual emotion.

In view of the supreme good which he wishes to obtain for us—even in this world, let us note—John of the Cross sees into our wretchedness and tears away our masks. His psychological insight into the depths of our being is marvelous. He fears those emotional upheavals which overtax our psycho-physiological apparatus, and we also see him reject en bloc all the extraordinary phenomena of the spiritual life. He prefers to ground us in Reason and Faith,

showing us a God of love, rather than a God of wrath. Above all, and we cannot stress this enough, he hunts down the unconscious motivation of this same affectivity and requires his disciples to renounce all narcissistic satisfactions. A religious tells him about her conversation with heaven, and Father John remarks: "Poor head which is always talking to God and to whom God is always replying. What an extravagance!" He stigmatizes the proud who discourse on mysticism and set themselves up with many sighs; the avaricious, who load themselves down with rosaries and reliquaries or who set up accounting systems for their prayers (one is reminded here of compulsion neurotics); the gluttons who want only "brutal penances" to fatigue their confessors (the good masochists). And then there are so-called spiritual inclinations which many a time "arise in sensuality rather than the spirit," including that love of God which originates in a vague need to love and is at bottom only self-love. "The reason why God should be served is because He is what He is. No other reason is necessary for love."

When the proper time has come, it is indispensable, here as in psychoanalysis, to wean ourselves away from the delights of an infantile paradise. This weaning is, says St. John of the Cross, accomplished by grace, who comes as a "tenderly loving mother" to accomplish it. The spiritual master can assist in the weaning process "very gently and carefully," specifies the saint in regard to extraordinary graces, because it is not necessary to brutally "fence the soul in."

It is really and truly a weaning. Because her child is growing up, grace, like a loving mother, "tries little by little to take away her caresses, to conceal the tenderness of her love from him, to remove him from that gentle breast upon

which she has put some essence of aloes to help wean him away." St. John of the Cross returns to this weaning process in chapters I, V and XII of the *Dark Night of the Senses*. At first a passive endurance of suffering, renunciation now enters the active stage, when resentment, greediness and all the "capital sins of beginners" begin to manifest the necessary revolt of the instinctive vitality preparatory to its sublimation. Dr. Julien Rouart questions whether or not St. John's doctrine of detachment from sensible things is not just an emotional and unconscious revivification of his separation from his beloved mother when he voluntarily entered the convent. Even if every separation, every detachment echoes an earlier and primary detachment, and is essentially a weaning process, there are vital differences in the aridities which human persons undergo. This difference does not consist so much in the specific characteristics of the barren condition as in the structure of the total personality. Is there oblation, that is, the gift of the self, or narcissistic regression, that is to say, egoism? This is the true criterion for determining whether a given condition is pathological or not. The tree is judged by its fruits.

St. John of the Cross repeatedly spoke of melancholy in connection with the three signs by which one recognizes that one should discontinue meditation for contemplation. He observed further that purgative aridity often helps and even vanquishes melancholy. This is true only in part, according to Prof. Laignel-Lavastine, who sees a necessary concomitance between certain pathological states—such as anguish in face of the void—and the three signs.... In the judgment of the Holy Doctor, melancholy is only a vexatious counterfeit of mystical passivity. Having shown how

Freud has elucidated the contrast between melancholy and the psychologically healthy reaction of grief—which is pertinent to our purpose—Dr. Rouart concludes: "Whereas in the reaction of mourning there is no longer any interest in what is going on in the outside world, except as it concerns the departed, in melancholy this preoccupation does not exist, so that the void and the absence of attraction for outside objects, let us remember, are absolute." This latter negative trait has been well described by St. John of the Cross: "When aridity is the result of emotional disturbances alone, there is nothing but aversion for life and prostration. The soul has no desire to serve the God which has sent her this purifying aridity. When, however, the desire for God exists, the sensitive part of the soul may well be cast down, weak and discouraged on account of the lack of pleasure which she finds in activity, nevertheless the spirit remains active and full of vigor." (*Night of Senses*, ch. 19).

The night of sense is the soul orienting itself, by memory and desire, toward God alone even in the midst of aridity. This orientation of lively Faith and Charity—not only charity toward God, but also charity toward the neighbor, where—as in the case of melancholy there is no gift of the self, but a turning-in upon the self—is comparable to the action of the compass-needle which always points toward the Pole. It is this, Dr. Grimbert remarks, "which is essentially lacking in the aridity of morbid processes which produce indifference to the striving for perfection and divine union even in subjects who are most preoccupied with religious considerations." Furthermore, "the depressed patient is ruled by fear, whereas the mystic, even in the midst of the most baffling and afflicting aridity, all perhaps contribut-

ing to his ascetic ascent, appears to feel that, despite everything, he is always under the law of love." (*L'aridité et certains processus psychopathologiques*, ETUDES CARMÉLITAINES, Oct. 1937, p. 130.)

Grace, like a divine mother, leads the spiritual person to an oblation of love which is not sentimental, but a fixation of the will, a commitment. "To love is to despoil the self and strip the self of all that is not God in order to be united with God." Thus the soul accepts poverty and insecurity or riches and security indifferently. It is not a matter of either this or that, read the guideposts along the rugged path of that Nothing which leads to the All. Use, but above all, do not become attached.

Imperfections are of little importance so far as the accidental venial fault is concerned. What is serious is the propensity, for through it one becomes more fixed in a state which sooner or later must be broken through. Propensities are filled with complexes and their liquidation is a long and arduous process. For this, St. John of the Cross recommends a mystical, and thus perfectly contemplative, technique which permits one to rise above temptation, rather than struggle with it. By a rapid mobilization of energy, the will ascends to love by acts of love. It leaps into the immutable and takes refuge there. Here is manifested the positive character of the ascesis of St. John of the Cross. Here is a psychological exemplification of perfect sublimation—orientation of all the psychic energies, consisting here of the libido congealed as inclination, then total commitment to something beyond the self. St. John of the Cross came to understand that the struggle *against* a shortcoming is only to strengthen it. So he invented this technique of "rising above."

All we can do is laboriously try to start and one day the Spirit will breathe and we will begin to move rapidly. All we need to do is to let things take their course. To intervene would hinder the divine action. Above all, to become tense and anxious under the superhumanly imposed passivity is fatal to true liberation. The soul must tell itself: God has created me and He knows how much I can stand, so I must open my being to divine treatment. Then I can be transmuted by divine operation. To feel that one is undergoing such a transformation is not pride, on the contrary, not to forge ahead is to fall back into neurosis, which always contains a substratum of pride. The neurosis reactivates an infantile psychic pattern within the self, then it regresses and turns its back on any sublimation. Whoever does not advance very humbly, knowing that one does not climb the ladder of love except by falling two steps backward to every step forward is obliged to retreat completely. All psychologists know that sublimation, despite all the risks which it entails, is necessary for man. As to the risks, excellent psychoanalysts who are unbelievers commend our theologians for teaching original sin and the redemption, thereby laying on Adam and on Christ the burden of guilt which weighs so heavily on man. And so it remains for us to unburden ourselves—the theologian says, in order to absolve us—by the practice of confession, the lack of which afflicts our Protestant brethren. Perhaps this is why psychoanalysis is so successful in predominantly Protestant regions. But it is not sufficient to acknowledge culpability—conscious or unconscious—we must return to the straight path. Certainly the submission of the sense nature to the spirit and of the spirit to God, which is essential to human

balance, is not attained by continually avoiding effort, risk and sacrifice. As a matter of fact, a determination to open ourselves completely to the inundation of divine grace is indispensable to salvation; a heroic determination, St. John of the Cross defines it. Yes indeed, because it has to be gone through twice—purgation of the senses, then purification of the spirit—a veritable divine "lye bath," cleansing and transforming. Then will follow, says the Mystical Doctor, the "excruciating death of the spirit." The soul enters into the "mysterious darkness of death" to await her spiritual resurrection.

I cite these expressions from the *Dark Night* because, all things considered, we can draw certain comparisons. We know today that the basis of certain successful therapeutical techniques (viz., the use of cardiazol and insulin shock) is the creation of a pregonal state. Bringing the being to the threshold of death activates certain substances in the body which have powerful qualities for the defense and revitalization of the organism. Dr. Ugo Cerletto has called them "acroagonines." Here we see the analogy to mystical experience: both bring a very real encounter with death. In psychoanalytical therapy, an emotional agony immediately precedes the actual beginning of a definite cure. Let us hasten to add that in the *Dark Night* of which St. John of the Cross speaks, God himself is the therapist and since He knows His patient inside out, He infallibly sustains and protects him.

The whole question is really that of deciding whether one wants to be saved rapidly or gradually. The former infirmarian of Medina del Campo maintains that there is only one operating table and that is the cross; a single basic method of salvation and that is a massive transfusion of divine life. It is a pain-

ful cure, because passivity under the sure hand of the Lord does not permit anaesthesia. The patient retains full consciousness, experiences his wretchedness completely—such is the lot of one who freely wills to be dissolved like rust in the strong acid of divine transformation. We are free to vegetate, without benefit of such treatment, until our last breath, counting on the Divine Mercy. John of the Cross claims to give us even now the blessedness of a perfect union with God, in a complete equality of love. There is only one condition: to anticipate the purifying sufferings from above, which transmute the being, actualizing all its potentialities and bringing all its faculties to a perfection comparable to the state of innocence, producing a unity infinitely superior to that which we might reach by natural means alone. St. John of the Cross guarantees that "the strong and disagreeable medicine" of purgatorial catharsis will cure the curse of melancholy, a general term used in the 18th century to include probably what we now call neurosis and psychosis. According to him, melancholy could not resist the passive night of the spirit, but unfortunately it is the privilege of "very few" souls, and "God knows why." There are depths in the human soul that God alone can plumb.

However, we do not claim that we can take away the clientele of the psychoanalyst or psychiatrist. There are cases which defy all attempts to follow the saint's counsel. If spiritual directors are thoroughly familiar with new psychological methods, particularly those of Freud and Jung, they will be able to tell what lies within their competence and what must be referred to psychological or psychoanalytical treatment. Being fully informed, they will have the insight to wait patiently for the specialist to build a new psychological

foundation in their confused penitent. There are particularly difficult cases where the director of conscience must seek further information.¹

AS PRIESTS, people say to us: read my soul. They come to us to be understood in their essence, to be set free. When believers and unbelievers alike think of us as "men not like other men," can we decently do less than nature and grace make it possible for us to do to justify their expectation? To merit our title of "Director of Conscience" have we sufficiently developed the gifts both natural and supernatural which Heaven has bestowed upon us? I remember that honorable psychiatrist who twenty-five years ago wondered in my presence why the Church does not reserve the direction of souls to certain priests who are also psychologists, leaving the distribution of the Sacraments to the rest of the clergy. How right he is, considering how often we have nothing to say to those who come to us for understanding and counsel. Do we not content ourselves only too often with unctuously mouthing platitudes, when action should be taken, directly or indirectly, in a given case? Have we ever really considered that we have a strict duty to carry certain heavy responsibilities in our care of souls? Do we realize that by making an evasive reply or leaving a person in doubt because we are not sufficiently schooled in science and psychology to give a sound judgment, we are undermining the emotional stability of the troubled soul who has placed his confidence and hope in us? Can you

¹ In France this might be sought through the Catholic Association for the Study of Therapeutic, Psychiatric, and Psychological Problems (73, rue de Courcelle, Paris 8, France), in publications like *Les Cahiers Laennec*, *Supplément de la Vie Spirituelle*, and the *Etudes Carmélitaines* series.

willingly concede that obsessional neurosis may so possess a man that he cannot tell whether he is in the state of grace or not because he has to sin in order to feel that he still exists, even though he does not have enough energy to keep on committing his sin? The Church expects a viable solution from us for this man whom the moral law puts on the rack. To be able to judge intelligently and fairly, you must be able to enter into the psychology of the offender. But your penitent is before you, expecting your judgment, and you are neither St. John of the Cross nor the Curé of Ars; you cannot read souls. To compensate for this lack, if one may venture to suggest it, an adequate knowledge of morpho-psychology will help you estimate his resources. Besides, the tone of his voice will be suggestive. He-rault de Sechelles asserts that the key of the voice corresponds in the musical scale to the key of the character in the moral scale. If this man writes to you, what does his handwriting reveal? Lastly, the stars incline us, said St. Thomas Aquinas at a time when we did not possess the precise information in astronomy which would be important in the evaluation of the possible influence of each of the stars used in Astrology. Each of these analytical tools demands talent, work and judgment to achieve proficiency in their use. It is necessary to use extreme prudence in their employment, especially in the case of astrology a certain scepticism is necessary. But where does the intuition of the astrologer come from? Spiritual direction is as yet far from being able to benefit from an astro-psychological diagnosis! As to the interpretation of dreams, it is no longer reserved to the magus, it is a psychoanalytical tool. (Of course, at the mere mention of this word, our friend Father Gemelli will probably re-

act strongly, but there is no need for alarm.)

Naturally, we do not intend to lower the intellectual level of the *ETUDES CARMÉLITAINES*. We rejoice more than anyone else over the article by Msgr. Alfred Ottaviani, Assessor of the Holy Office, entitled "Truth and Falsehood in the Supernatural," which appeared in the Feb. 9, 1951 issue of *L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO*. After having struggled for over twenty years in the cause of a theology of the supernatural, in comparison with which charisms are as nothing, we will permit ourselves at least a glance at the human means of liberation and penetration into the spiritual. We ought not to forget that John of the Cross is an intellectual; not only did he give judicious counsel, but he also gave reason the place of honor, even though Providence overwhelmed him with extraordinary graces! "Use your reason so that you may do what it tells you as you are climbing up to God, and that will be more valuable to you than all the works you may do without its guidance." But really, isn't it reasonable to make use of the means we have enumerated above for the benefit of our penitents?

"If I could banish magic from my path, I could be a man," said Faust at the end of his drama. We cannot be simply men; we are priests, and magic enfolds us with its seduction. Ask unbelievers why they expect us to be chaste. If someone comes to us, if, alas, someone becomes attached to us, it is because of the Holy which makes us more approachable, more accessible, to men. Even before having any "powers," we exercise a power: we consecrate and absolve. I am thinking of this passage from *Desire for Power*: "The fascination which works for us, the eye of Venus which bewitches even our adversaries

and makes them blind, is the magic of the extreme; the seduction which the last things always exercise. We other immoralists, we are the extremists." A true priest, a mystic, is an Immoralist, in a way that is not all Nietzschean. He leads the soul beyond Good and Evil,

not to the Hell of Indifference, but—said John of the Cross—to that place where there is no longer a way to follow, because for the just there is no law." Thus, he passes beyond the morality of moralism.

Translated by JANE MADRELL

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SCIENCE, PHENOMENOLOGY, ONTOLOGY

ALPHONSE DE WAELEHENS

IT SHOULD be recognized that the very difficult problem of distinction among the various forms of knowledge which are or can be science, phenomenology and ontology, has yet to receive the attention it deserves from phenomenologists. Rather than clarifying and simplifying it, the evolution of phenomenology itself has only made the question more difficult by outstripping in its movement the genuinely radical, if somewhat primitive, possibilities of solution which Husserl himself imagined.

On this point, Husserl had very firm convictions. Science is any systematic "mundane" knowledge, that is, any systematic knowledge which is elaborated *without the express consideration*, along with the data itself, *of the act which knows it*. As for metaphysics, it is simply no longer needed. This is because philosophy is identified with phenomenology, and the latter will not have completed its task until it has rendered explicit the most original experience of man, the experience which determines in the last analysis the meaning and legitimacy of ultimate questions and, in general, of the very possibility

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of a question. The fate of metaphysics, then, is settled: either its problems are assumed and rethought in the framework of phenomenology, or they are reckoned to be meaningless. A particularly suggestive text confirms this: "A transcendental phenomenology of the sort which I have defined embraces all the problems of philosophy and provides the method adequate to their solution. It assumes all the questions which can be posed on the basis of the concrete existence of man, including the so-called metaphysical questions, to the extent these have any meaning—meaning which phenomenology is originally and solely called upon to define and to delimit critically."¹ This passage, which introduces the English translation of the *Ideen*, announces clearly and categorically Husserl's fundamental principles on this matter. It also explains that the formal exclusion of an extra-phenomenological philosophy is perfectly compatible with a phenomenological "ontology." Toward the latter, Husserl worked constantly.²

But it should be asked just what these theses effectively mean, and to what extent the evolution of phenomenology has made them more precise or modified them.

Let us examine first of all the problems of positive science. Here Husserl never accepted the pragmatist or conventionalist solution. He thought—and it seems to us impossible not to think—that science provides a genuine *explanation* of the reality which it considers. That such is also the case with philosophy can scarcely be doubted. Hence, if philosophy and science are not to be simply identified, it is necessary to ad-

mit the existence of and to define *levels* of explanation or *levels* of reality or—what is most likely—both at once. What we have said above furnishes the basis for these distinctions. Science brings to light the “actual” object (*l'objet non réduit*) and its inter-objective relations. It abstracts absolutely from the intentional movement which bears us toward things, and ignores the effort which makes or permits them to appear. In other words it takes the object simply as given, and ignores the fact that it presents itself within an *encounter* and a coexistence. But that encounter and that coexistence are themselves susceptible of innumerable modalities which correspond to the diverse ways in which it is possible for the object to present itself and to the various ways which I have of opening myself to it and of behaving in its regard. It is precisely these modalities which phenomenology describes. It does so in suspending—not suppressing—the effectiveness of the intentional drive which carries us towards things. That means that we cease simply to move with and through that intention as we usually do—without noticing it (just as when I wear glasses I see reality through a transparent medium of which I am not “aware”). Henceforth we consider both intention and what is presented to it.

This carries us further than it might seem, implying not only a distinction between science and phenomenology but also a theory of their relations.

We are led to admit the primacy, in a sense absolute, of reality as encounter. The famous Husserlian theory of the reduction to a primitive world has no other meaning. But, if ultimately, reality is coexistence of myself and world, ordination of world to me and opening of myself to the world, at once myself and that which is other than myself, and this according to a plurality of modes

which may be infinite, what is to be thought of science? For science is always and in principle, science of the *actual* “given” object. How is it that this reality which it studies and which we know to be the correlate of a certain institution established *on the basis of perception* (and perhaps to deny the latter) is nonetheless *genuinely real* and *really genuine*? As far as we know, an explicit answer to that question is not to be found in the work of Husserl. Nor is such an explicit answer to be found in the many and varied works of those who have taken up and followed the fundamental line of his thought. It seems to us, however, that everything points to the solution which we shall attempt to formulate.

Scientific knowledge is essentially the theory and the system of the objective dimension of reality, reality which, in its full sense, is first of all and primarily *encounter*. It is possible to distinguish *abstractly*, within perceptive co-existence, an *objective* face, the dimension of the other. The explanation of this is the work of science, and it is because science is *constitutive* of all “positive” knowledge that it regards what it studies simply as *given*. But let us avoid a superficial objection. It is well-known that contemporary physics cannot, on infra-atomic levels, radically separate the observed phenomenon from the influence exercised upon it by the one making the observation. But this does not present a difficulty for the thesis which I am defending here. Here it is not a matter of the observer as subject taking up a position with regard to the reality which he encounters, but of the energy which emanates from him because of the *material* work of observation. The latter is itself simply an objective data of “phenomena.” The real meaning of the objection, then, is not that science is itself constrained to introduce the subject

into its explanation, but rather that the objective face of what is real forms, ultimately, a *totality*, and that it is—still ultimately and to the extent that the explanation is complete—illegitimate to dissect this totality, at least if one intends “to individualize” the elements obtained by this dissection.

A further consequence follows from this. Everything which positive science studies is in fact *abstract* and does not *exist* as such, in the full sense of this word. Inversely, neither does there exist the pure subject which one “obtains” in withdrawing from perceptive co-existence the “purely” subjective aspect. It need be said, then, that science knows a true reality, but knows it only under a formality which is not itself “realized” as such.

From this point of view we can take up again the objection mentioned above and show that, rather than creating a difficulty for our thesis, it actually confirms it. If, by the deepening of that point of view which defines it, science comes to realize that it is impossible for it to deal with *things*, but that, at most, it can only understand *matter*, would this not be precisely because its object is not a concrete “this,” the substrata of “a thing” in the sense (still to be defined) which natural experience gives to the word? Would it not be that its object is what is found in each and every “this” and which can, by abstraction, be detached from it, without ever belonging to it in that separated form which our experience calls existence?

These considerations should be completed by a word on that purely subjective dimension of concrete primordial reality, which parallels its purely objective face. Here we face a major difficulty at the outset. It is clear that there cannot be a “science”—a theoretical and systematic explanation—of the pure subject. Such would be a contra-

diction in terms since, as we have said, it is constitutive of the very notion of science that it treat what it studies simply as given (*en donné pur*). But the subject—at least the subject as such—cannot be treated in this fashion. It is constitutionally unobjectifiable, hence the equivocations on the status of psychology, “science” of the subject. The attention which Husserl gave throughout his career to the problem of its status, and the difficulty which he experienced in showing that psychology, although different from other sciences, nonetheless remains a mundane science absolutely distinct from phenomenology, are well known and appreciated. We would say, to attempt to solve that difficulty, that there are and should be several types of psychology. The science which bears that name today is not, in fact, a study of the subject insofar as it is to be identified with that subjective face of reality of which we have spoken. Rather, it is a consideration of the subject insofar as it is an element or member (with a distinctive structure differentiating the science which studies it from any other) of “*omnitudo realitatis*” which presents itself as a spectacle to be looked upon by positive knowledge. Psychology is thus objectifying both by nature and by function. Its field of investigation is not an interiority inaccessible by essence to any positive knowledge, but “behavior,” that is, the typical observable reactions which characterize the being called man, the original forms of exchange and transformation which that being establishes with his milieu and with other men.

But we have as yet said nothing of that pole of experience which is simply subjective, the pure—and abstract—dimension of the subjectivity. Of course, neither phenomenological psychology nor metaphysical psychology (if they exist, which is what we shall have to

discuss) need concern themselves with it. One can wonder if its revelation is not to fall to what is called, often with foolish contempt—the “psychology of novelists.” I know that at first view this seems quite far from corresponding to the preliminary suggestions which we have just outlined. It will certainly be difficult to admit that the novel does not have in view the concrete subject or, to take up the objections which come immediately to mind, that the contemporary American novel is committed to subjectivity rather than to behavior. Still, it seems to us that these difficulties are not insurmountable. Since a discussion of this in detail would take us out of the framework of this effort, let us simply say that we need distinguish between what the novel “presents” and what it evokes. It can suggest what is irreducible and properly ineffable in the subject only by displaying the subject, but it can display him in a manner dictated by the demands of that suggestion, situated in its world. This “presentation” points beyond itself and envisions making us sense what is most individual and most “subjective” in the subjective. The latter is, however, formally abstract, since on the level of concrete existence, pure subjectivity only realizes itself in a dialogue with what is not itself. The novelist knows this better than anyone, and this is why he makes no attempt to confront the subject *directly*. Even if he is given to the introspection of his heroes, as is Proust or Joyce, his account of these heroes is immersed in their own becoming, which is a perpetual and necessary encounter with things and others.

WITH THESE CLARIFICATIONS at hand we need now circumscribe phenomenology and distinguish it from metaphysics or ontology. In its Husserlian form, phenomenology proposes an, in

principle, total elucidation of experience, which it intends to conduct in such a way that this experience will appear unchallengeably founded. That formulation, deliberately chosen, is not, however, faultless. For one thing it does not correspond entirely with what phenomenology has become since; without absolutely rejecting the notions of *total* elucidation and *unchallengeable* foundation, it has transformed them. Besides this, our formula barely conceals what is a contradiction, or at least an essential tension. It is not the same thing (and in any case not *necessarily* the same thing) to reveal explicitly the entire content of experience, and to furnish for that experience an unchallengeable foundation *which it may not have*. That opposition is at the origin of the metamorphosis accomplished by the idea of an unchallengeable foundation. It cannot be doubted that with Husserl, this expression is taken in an equivocal manner. For him, the unchallengeable foundation is at the same time the presence “in person” (*leibhaft*) of what is given to consciousness, but also, and according to a point of view which may be irreconcilable with this, the reference of what is given to a transcendental *ego* which is its absolute source. The notion of unchallengeable foundation, which is identified on one hand with that of presence (permitting Husserl to maintain proudly that phenomenology was the only authentic positivism), is then identified with an apodictic subjectivity in the Cartesian sense. It would, of course, be a serious error to forget that that subjectivity is for Husserl something completely different than it was for Descartes. The perfect transparency and immanence of the *cogito* of the *Meditations de prima philosophia* is identified with a subject which becomes itself and is itself *only* in its knowing of what is not itself, what

is *other*. That difference is at the source of the tension of which we have spoken because it constitutes consciousness according to the *other* and the *other* according to consciousness. With that it also transforms the perspectives of classical metaphysics, which finds an absolute foundation in the presence of self to self. For the classical philosopher, that presence is defined as an *immediately meaningful self-possession* which provides metaphysical affirmations with a content sharing in the certitude of the basis upon which they are revealed. The Cartesian *cogito*, for example, becomes explicit as a *thinking thing*, which thinks clear and distinct ideas, among them the idea of a perfection which I am not but whose existence is implied. This absolute foundation, because it reveals a meaningful possession of self, guarantees not only the possibility of metaphysics, but its very content.

The Husserlian viewpoint is quite different. The presence of self to self is not a self-possession which is meaningful, but an evidence *based upon the evidence of presence to another*. The content of presence to self is completely exhausted by its reference to another. In itself it is empty. It follows that its unchallengeable character is only total on the basis of this presence of the other that the *I* attains to the awareness of itself. As for the contents of this awareness, it is always to be formed by the effective relations which we have with that other or these others. That means that if the fact of my presence is as indubitable as that of the presence of the object—and is, insofar as really given, absolute—my presence to myself attains its necessary and apodictic character only if that necessity and that apodictic character belong to the object upon which the consistence of my self-consciousness depends. It is certain that no object possesses these characteristics.

Even the world (which is not, properly speaking, an object, an other *lived* by me) lacks them. It is true that I must say, when the couple consciousness-other emerges, that the other and myself are *necessarily* located in the unity of the world. But that does not imply the necessity of such an emergence, nor of the world which is its correlate. Beyond the fact of that emergence, no question is meaningful, since the very notions of meaning and of question appear only with it.

If, then, the idea of an apodictic foundation remains characteristic of philosophy, it is to be found here only as *quest* and goal to be pursued without respite. This apodictic foundation of which the philosopher thinks and from which he hopes to take his point of departure, can only lie ahead of him if it is anywhere. It is the object of a conquest forever incomplete.

What are the points of view of ontology under such conditions? We mean by that the perspectives of a research which takes upon itself the understanding of the being of the "ontic" realities proposed to the description of the phenomenologist, and effectively described by him. If one shifts it to the historical level, this problem appears to be precisely that of the passage from a phenomenology of the Husserlian variety to a philosophy of the Heideggerian type. We have dwelt upon this at some length in another work.³ Here we limit ourselves to a brief review of our theses, completing them on a few points.

Husserlian phenomenology has for its ultimate point of reference the *presence* of that which is viewed. *Seeing* is the crucial act for Husserl. E. Fink has formulated this clearly and decisively: "For Husserl seeing is the original evidence, the mode of consciousness in which the being manifests itself in its 'bodily' reality, presents itself in person."⁴ Such

a thesis imposes above all because of the impossibility of admitting the contrary thesis without presupposing the former as prior and true. It is, however, not innocent of implicit ontological affirmations which Husserl never elucidated, despite his stands on the relation of phenomenology and ontology which we have seen. It is evident, for example, that the capacity to "see" the other for what it is, and as it is, implies on the part of the being gifted with that "view," the possibility of a radical opening out upon that other. The idea of a transcendental intentionality is inseparable from the idea of a being which is another without being that other. If the human structure is not such that it can satisfy this double requirement—which, logically speaking, is contradictory—pure intentionality is impossible. For in the absence of such a structure I will be either identified with things or radically separated from them. In the first case I would no longer be and in the second there would no longer be truth, even in the form of a pretension whose legitimacy was yet to be established. But these two consequences are refuted by the very experience of the *cogito*. One need, then, only recognize on the part of the *cogito* the structure which avoids them, even if the elements of that structure demand, in order to be reconciled, a complicated dialectic.

The structure of being which we have recognized on the part of the human being—and which consists, in its most general and least elaborated form, in being the other in a mode which is not the being of the other—can otherwise be expressed by saying that *the being of the human being is to be the comprehension of being*. Indeed, that I can be (in order to know them) the things that I know and do, without being them (since I do not effectively identify my-

self with them), means that I seize them in what they are without identifying myself with them as beings, which is to say that I comprehend their being.

One need conclude, then, that the intentionality is based on the opening out which is itself identical with the comprehension of being, and that the latter is what the human being properly is. It can be expressed differently by saying that man is *by nature light* (*lumière*). Man is, of all beings, the one of which *lumen naturale* is the proper definition.

If these ideas mark a decisive step for the justification of ontology, it is necessary that they bring to the scene at least a suggestion of solution for the difficulties of ontology itself. They authorize but one single conclusion: phenomenology must arrive at the affirmation that man is a being whose definition is the comprehension of being.

If it is to be admitted that ontology as a science is the rendering explicit of that "natural" comprehension, it will be in order to style that comprehension, in its ordinary and spontaneous form, as pre-ontological comprehension. Once the possibility of such a knowledge is founded in the very being of man, it will have to be seen just what its essential articulations are and how they develop. We will forego that task, since it is beyond the scope of this project. We cannot dispense ourselves however from saying a word on a final difficulty which concerns the problems of possibility.

What language shall ontology use? It should be conceded that ordinary language is not adequate to the accomplishment of its mission. For this language, entirely geared to the ontic elucidation of things, was formed in function of one particular spontaneous conception of being, whose basis ontology as a science should examine. It obviously cannot be hoped that an instrument established

entirely in the climate of a particular ontological comprehension, born in the concrete and unreflected application of our general capacity for comprehension of being, can serve without modification for a criticism of that very capacity and of the various modes of comprehension capable of incarnating it. More simply, and in terms of example, is a language which is entirely substantialist because it developed during that historical period when being was identified with the particular being (which is *one* manner of understanding being and of exercising the intelligence that we have of it), is such a language adequate to the study of *every* comprehension of being? The temptation is very strong to answer in the negative. Yet how are we to speak unless in a language already established and so under the influence of a particular pre-ontological comprehension. Is there not a circle here? The answer to this will at least make it evident why the torture to which several contemporary philosophies submit "common" language is not the unhealthy fruit of some metaphysical sadism.

It seems that the answer should be sought in that characteristic of every language of being able to convey more than it actually says. This is what permits language and consciousness to advance even within non-philosophical experience, for here too, at least at times, we say, in words and phrases known by everyone, things which have never yet been said, and we are understood. But here it is a question of something quite different. For our problem is not to reveal what is most hidden in things by using words which have served us in the discovery of what we already know, but without reaching or elucidating that ontology which gives the words meaning. On the contrary, we wish to attempt that elucidation, and what we will come to understand thereby is nothing

that the things "contain" for either the initial or the most highly developed view. Moreover, being is not a specific subject. We are oriented toward beings only, and being only appears through them since they are only thanks to being. This consideration resolves a first part of our difficulty: the indirect nature of language, its ability to move beyond that to which it is immediately ordered (or perhaps the inevitability of its doing so), fits perfectly our experience of being. The fact that being is always that which appears only thanks to a being and that we cannot seize directly upon it makes being expressible only by an act of knowledge which is itself capable of carrying beyond what it designates. The comprehension of being, source of language, can then, in principle, be established by language in an explicit form.

And now the second part of the objection. The language which we have at our disposal is not simply oriented by the *general* comprehension of being. It is elaborated on the basis of and in the light of a particular comprehension in which the general comprehension is exercised. How then use the language which issues from the particular comprehension of being to express or to criticize the general possibility of comprehending being? It can be answered that the particular comprehension—for example, that which comprehends being as thing, substance, a being—is itself instituted in response to an *effective experience* of being. But that experience, if it has ceased to be explicitly present, can be recovered (such is the ultimate mission of the phenomenological reduction) and, once recovered, *effectively modified*. Thence, there arises correlatively a new comprehension of being from which a new language *can* be born which *could* be the modification of the one which preceded it.

It is quite clear that this manner of resolving the problem of the possibility of ontology opens a new area of questions. What is an experience of being? How is it modified and why? Do these questions themselves have a meaning? What is meant by the correlative character of the experience of being and its comprehension? To what extent are they different and to what extent identical?

To these questions a fully developed ontology must respond. Such an ontology, one with that precision, does not exist even in the work of the philosopher who made us understand, on the basis of the Husserlian phenomenology, its necessity and possibility. We know, however, if all this has a meaning, that the way is open and that some are already committed to it.

Translated by JOHN F. BANNAN

¹ Here is the German text: We will prove "dass eine transzendente Phänomenologie mei-

nes Sinnes in der Tat den universalen Problemhorizont der Philosophie umspannt und dafür die Methodik bereit halt; dass sie also wirklich alle vom konkreten Menschen aus zu stellenden Fragen, darunter auch alle sogenannten metaphysischen, in ihrem Felde hat, soweit sie überhaupt einen möglichen Sinn haben—den allerdings erst diese Phänomenologie ursprünglich zu gestalten und kritisch zu begrenzen ist." *Nachwort zu meinen Ideen . . .*, in *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und Phänomenologische Forschung*, vol. XI, p. 551, Halle, Niemeyer, 1930.

² We doubt that there is in Husserl's work an ontology, properly speaking. But it cannot be doubted that he wished to elaborate one and believed that he had.

³ *Phénoménologie et Vérité*, Paris, P.U.F., 1953.

⁴ "Sehen ist—für (Husserl)—ursprüngliche Evidenz, ist Bewusstseinsmodus, in welchem sich das Seiende in seinem "leibhaften" Selbst-dasein zeigt, sich selbst gibt." *Das Problem der Phänomenologie E. Husserls in Revue internationale de Philosophie*, 2, 1939, p. 253. It goes without saying that the terms "seeing" and "bodily reality" need to be taken in their broadest meaning here.

THE CATHOLIC WORKER

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TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF WORK

M. D. CHENU

"THERE WILL ALWAYS be workers and bosses." This cliché of social conservatism, which provides a hiding place for the most total ignorance of the role of labor in the evolution of humanity, was rather widely diffused among a large group of Christians before World War I, so that even a very high Church authority had naively made use of it in his turn. Even the most fervent fraternal charity, with which this saying was customarily seasoned, could not undo the damage; on the contrary, it masked its harmfulness with a spurious good conscience.

The refusal of class warfare, seen as an immediate consequence, also showed the ambiguity of this attitude. Although the brotherly love of the gospel rejects hatred, which is the conflict of two egotisms and not human liberation, the observation of facts and the demands of justice, which are at the very basis of evangelical love, impose the reality of a relation of force between capital and labor against the fakery of philanthropists and the thesis of liberal harmony. The moral virtues cannot resolve this antagonism, neither appeasing the envy of one group, nor the greed of the other. What is needed is a transformation of economic structure. It is not a matter of a quarrel between rich and poor, but the basic facts of the economic and social organization.

This pious moralism, which makes the

demands of the gospel insipid and betrays the Christian curse on money, certainly has not stopped infecting the mentality of many Christians, but at least it has lost the support which formerly an over-hasty theology had unconsciously provided. We are still far from having a "theology of work," to use a phrase that has recently been put in circulation, but Christian thought has taken up this task, going beyond the morality of intentions, analyzing work as an "object" in its own density, its economic function, and its historic role. It is no longer a question of decorating its content with high values which are external to work. This would only confirm its alienation, which would be very bad theology. We must know its nature, its material and human aspects, so that we may make a Christian judgment on its internal laws and Christian requirements. If it can be said (as in the special issue of *ESPRIT*, July-August 1951) that "the civilization of work" would demand an ethics of work, which no one has yet produced, Christians will be able to collaborate in preparing the ground only by a reflection which can grasp first of all the significance of work for 20th century humanity.

It is curious and rather discouraging to observe that, if not since the Middle Ages, the period of classical theology in the West, at least since the 16th century with Vittoria and Suarez, there has been among Christians a *theology of war*. (Let us understand by theology not an esoteric science for intellectuals, but a reflection bearing, organically and rationally, under the light of faith, on human realities, and thus entering, by right and by expedient, into the economy of salvation.) There was also a

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theology of business, if only in the obstinate condemnation of usury, that we are told prevented—but very ineffectively!—the birth of capitalism; there was a *theology* of history—indeed different theologies, even if their truth was contested, as in the case of Bossuet's providentialist theology—; but there was no *theology* of work. We are told that the very term is recent. Since the 19th century there has been talk of a morality of work, and for the past 20 years even a mystique of work, or a spirituality of work, but the expression *theology* of work has only turned up in the last five years or so. This is significant. It tends to confirm the statement made that until now the Christian doctors have taken this reality into consideration only as an amorphous matter. Like everything else it could be moralized and sanctified under the category of "duty of one's state in life." Of course, the chapters of *Genesis* received commentary in terms of the penal character of work; but direct attention was not given to its objective content, in order to perceive the original value that this content, economic and human, could contract, by considering it in its possible relations with God's government over the world.

We should not be bitter about this absence of a *theology*, since it is only recently we have developed a psychology of work, or a sociology or philosophy of work. Today these areas are being actively pursued, and in a common line, including the theological aspect. The same fact controls the same delay, if there is one; it is that, in sorting out these "scientific" disciplines beyond the psychological, sociological, philosophical, and religious empiricisms, we must gain an awareness whose sharpness overwhelms the mind after overwhelming life. The history of 19th century thought records, due to the staggering developments of economic and social tech-

niques, the first steps of this coming to consciousness which nourishes both revolutions and philosophies. Today we have reached sufficient maturity, if not to resolve problems, at least to pose them, from methodical analysis to high speculation and even in *theology*, as we mentioned above.

All men have worked, they have toiled at work, certainly. But just as they analyzed and defined the laws of love only at a time when an awareness had developed and had provoked reflective observation, in the same way a science of work has been started only at the moment when man has taken a kind of collective awareness of work which has allowed him to observe its laws, its purposes, and its historic role. This consciousness has been produced, during the past century, when as a consequence of its radical transformation work has presented itself to man—not just to his effort, but also to his mind—as a new reality, whose conditions and strictures profoundly modified the type of human life, and not simply its level. This was a double and unique transformation which overturned the relations between man and nature. The passage from the tool to the machine not only opened a new phase of economy, but inaugurated a new age of humanity. Unfortunately, the first human episode produced by the efficiency of the machine was, as we know, the disastrous creation of a proletariat. The proletariat has been the terrain of this developing consciousness, which is not only a revolutionary, but also, if we may say so, a scientific consciousness.

The climaxes of this development are known. We will mention here, in the very language of theologians—since for the moment we restrict ourselves to repercussions in Christian *theology*—a small but significant indication: where as Leo XIII spoke "on the condition

of the working class (*opifices*)," according to the title *Rerum Novarum* (1891), 40 years later, Pius XI gave as summary of a chapter of his encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*, "The liberation of the proletariat (*proletarii*)."¹ Like the psychologist or sociologist, it is with the proletariat fact, the social consequence of industrialism, that Christian reflection on a theology of work begins. "In contradiction of the plan of God the work of man tends in these conditions to become an instrument of deprivation; inert matter emerges ennobled from the shop, while men are degraded in it." This apostolic cry of Pius XI, in which is echoed the protest of sociologists and the revolt of revolutionaries, bears within it the animating intuition of a constructive reflection, determined to go beyond empiricism, even that of the love of the poor.

Hence it is not simply a matter of enlarging classical morality, deducing from its "eternal principles" marginal applications which might better adjust to the situation of the times. We must look freshly at this new human ground which work makes up, since in the age of the machine it has become a reality without common measure with that which it was in other eras, transfigured in its function, its ends, and its structure. The tragic fissure between mechanization and humanization cannot be reduced simply by the usual themes of the respect for manual labor which Christianity restored, its value as an educative discipline, or even on the level of faith, its ascetical function in a world where suffering, sin and liberation are linked. The traditional imagery of the potter, the blacksmith, the peasant, with which the Bible formerly nourished theologians, is not only insufficient material, but has often sacralized in them a resentment against the machine and has led them into a suspect eulogy of the

artisan, the patriarchal family, the peasantry, and small holdings of private property, which has been both bad theology and vain romanticism. The human protest against work-as-merchandise, which generates the proletariat, must be taken up by the Christian on his own account and with his own motives; it must be echoed at the level of theological and moral reflection. The requirements of a "civilization of work" are also, in the light of the Gospel, the requirements and the bases for a "theology of work."

1.

SINCE THE MOVEMENT from the tool to the machine brings about, not simply quantitative intensification, but a qualitative transformation of human work, and therefore results in modifying the type of life both of individuals and of the mass of humanity, what we need is more than an extension of the morality of human occupations. The new significance of work must be defined, in this unforeseen meeting of man and nature. For if we have some hope of overcoming the present convulsions of a humanity that is overwhelmed by the machine, and of going beyond a merely external adaptation—which would only be a further burden—to a vital assimilation, this can only be through the arrival of a humanity which has carried to its conclusion the rational and virtuous expropriation of nature.

But this is the earthly destiny of man, and his essential characteristic. "Let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth. And God created man to his own image" (Genesis, I, 26-7). Man is *homo sapiens*, but at least collectively, he can only be that by the accomplishment of

homo artifex, which is his first definition. The nature of man, Mounier said paradoxically, is artifice:

If man is made to become god, whether naturally or supernaturally, he cannot accept that his wisdom should lie in a prudent and monotonous conformity to a nature once and for all defined . . . Man, from this standpoint, is essentially *artifex*, a maker of artifacts . . . The knight errants of nature do well to remind us that the human condition cannot be stretched in every direction, and that humanity needs time in which to assimilate its own deformations. But the systematic discrediting of the artificial is due to a radically falsified vision of what is proper to man. It would hardly be a distortion of meaning to say that the nature of man is artifice. (*Be Not Afraid*, pp. 18-9)

Man fulfills himself by dominating, by means of his discoveries, his reason, his power, and his virtue, that nature which is *his* domain, of which he has made a new world, a *human* world. God has established him as master of creation.

This man in history, at the major stage of such an undertaking, should also be at a major stage of his fulfillment. (Mounier continues: "From this point of view one might say that in the dawn of modern times man achieved a sort of hidden life, lying in the womb of a universe closed round him like an egg, and in the heart of a Church which kept control over his first steps.") The worst setbacks and the most culpable wrongdoing cannot condemn this destiny. Each victory over space and time—the two dimensions of work—, even when accompanied by a mad pride, reveals its grandeur and truth.

This "humanism" of work and the rationalization that it implies is not feared by the theologian. The seizure of the universe by technics does not destroy the sense of mystery, which some people wish to reserve only for those

realities which we have not made, and to which we submit with fear. The terrible gods of the religion of Lucretius are false gods. We cede too easily to the opposition between the rational and the sacred, in this way remaining in the age of children. Work would be a profanation, an impious effort to exploit nature. No; reason, as much the fabricating reason of the arts and trades as that reason which is master of thought and interiority, is in us, unique power in the duality of its functions, the highest and surest trace of God, more than a trace, an image. Its autonomy, in epistemological method, in interior liberty as in practical action, is the fine point of this image; it is here where it runs the greatest risk of pridefully refusing to acknowledge its divine relationship. But this is a risk that it ought to run and conquer in order to be itself. This "rationalization," beginning with that of time, which is the first character of our machine civilization, is only the technical condition of the discovery and the seizure of those "reasons" which are in things and in the universe, in which we recognize our own reason, measure of all things, by the participation of God. The world is full of ideas, said the Ancients; the work which makes them give birth, is a major act of an adult man, and we must not, whether from the right or the left, oppose it to contemplation. The Christian wise man, in opposition to the aristocratic Greek philosopher, or the cartesian spiritualist, finds his unity in these two connected functions. A civilization of work will furnish fine material for the approaches and mysteries of theology.

Moreover, even before our technocrats, Descartes and Newton had desacralized the world by making it inanimate. But it was an infantile world, and without knowing it (I am certainly not absolving their ignorance) the techno-

crats give us access to a nature, which from the 13th century, in the first European development of technics, the rationalist and anti-clerical Jean de Meung called "the vicar of God." In the trial of the machine, we have to define limits and expose the perils of a naive optimism. But against some mystifications which are not always disinterested, we should also reveal elements of the human condition in its springs. By transforming work, it has inaugurated a new age of man in the universe.

2.

After the basic demand for a theology of work, we must consider its ends. They too are renewed by its technical transformation, for unpublished motivations—which up till now may have been mostly unconscious—are implied in these new structures, and reveal themselves today precisely through this act of consciousness which has brutally driven them beyond primitive goals. Today work has not *only* the purpose of earning us our bread; it creates in some way a social energy, which is immediately at the service of humanity as a whole. In his poverty, the worker has a confused awareness, underneath his bitter protests, of this admirable efficaciousness;—the same as, in his disinterested loyalty, is had by the head manager of the enterprise. To produce today cannot and ought not simply to be for profit alone, whether the elementary profit of a daily wage, or the grossly immoderate profit of the capitalist. The act of production extends beyond this, to the human ends of individual and collective advancement, in an economy of service and of needs. The dogmas of liberal industrialism have met with a check; it is in a completely different way that work is an instrument of liberation.

Here are fine hints for theology. For

too long it has remained with its thesis regarding the moderation of profit, and its most severe criticism of capitalism has not abandoned this framework. But here we have a way in which theology can go beyond this purely moral element, in order to ground its position in terms of human-Christian economy, on the physical density of work as an element in the construction of the world, and in a religious sense, of the divine government. From this history we do not hesitate to look forward to the revelation of a new moral value.

3.

Our perspective has gone beyond men, to the evolution of society. Work is a factor of humanization in becoming the pivot of a "socialization," thanks to which humanity surmounts a decisive stage in its collective advance.

The second crime of the machine which is most attacked, after that of rationalization, is the matter of concentration—material, economic, financial, demographic—with its unfortunate consequences. It is hardly necessary to denounce these things again. But once again we should situate their causes and not misplace responsibility. It is true that work today, not only in its massive industrial complexes but even in its smaller shops which apparently have less constraining aspects, requires an unprecedented physical and psychological concentration of its means and its forms. But this overwhelming constraint releases of itself a collective consciousness in which a solidarity of high human value is expressed. Whether it is a matter of small cells or mass organization, it produces, despite profound variations and growing risks, a phenomenon of interiority, in which, slowly and severely, the consciousness of participation in a common work (if it

is common) is produced, a sense of belonging to the human network with the same good to be advanced. Such a concurrence, even under constraint, helps to produce a freedom that has been nourished by that love of a common good in which one feels he is taking part. This is the law of "community" which is discussed by sociologists. We can find in it, but always keeping a sense of proportion, what spiritual writers of all ages, from St. Paul to St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, observe by their interiorization of law, through which the one who obeys finds his freedom in his very docility. In place of the opaque juxtaposition, the brute "objective" presence of individuals to each other, there is a spiritual presence, a fraternal instinct developing a social climate which previously had been callous.

Here again brutal reality contradicts this paradisaical dream. There is hardly a worse war than that of those "communities" which represent classes in the world of labor. Nevertheless, we cannot disown the nature of things because of the malice of men. In any case the Christian should not be surprised, since he knows that sin drove man out of his earthly paradise; but his conclusion from this is simply that, like everything else, including love, work ought to be redeemed. It is the Christian economy of redemption; work is the first thing affected, according to the account in *Genesis*. The nature of things remains, nevertheless, and with it that social material which released interior forces of spiritualization, where solidarities, which were first and for a long time brutal, link men together in common enterprises. By re-integrating man in his work, socialization becomes a force for liberation. That the proletariat has taken consciousness of their situation, with bitterness and violence, has been

the effect of this law; but we need not despair that some day it will bear its fruit in peace and fraternity. Surely what is needed is the development of those communities which alone can be the spiritual tie of such an interiorization, and ultimately of that human promotion of persons and freedom. This is what would produce the most stringent reforms of structure. At least we know that depersonalizing collectivism is only the human perversion, in a catastrophic interval, of an operation which will ultimately manifest the social nature of man. Once again work reveals the depths of its nature. The spirituality of work needs to be established at this depth as authentic theology.

4.

Finally, since the social progress—spiritual, not only economic—of man determines the laws of his history, we see work become, in his consciousness, one of the factors of this history, interfering with the play of the freedoms and determinisms of matter. Of its transformations, its efficacy, its ends, time is effectively the arena and the measure. In the same way that in the evolution of the cosmos man has anatomically reached his final stage, thus in the evolution of the world man is being completed socially; here work plays a role of the first importance. The unabridgable discontinuity of matter and spirit does not break this unity of history, of which the Creator has made man his agent. Man is precisely the being who, indissolubly and consubstantially both matter and spirit, is fit by this to carry the mystery of spirit into history. Angels have no history. An old medieval theologian said that God, wishing to extend his love to all in a creative expansion, was able to do so only by and in an original being, who, linked to matter,

would carry the destinies of love even within matter.¹ It is not only in carnal love that this divine expansion is achieved, it is also everywhere that a community is expressed which is based on a material work. The solidarity of work is a privileged area at a time when this solidarity is in effect creative of humanity, and by that very act, a motive force of history, since material time is the vehicle of this continuous creation. The sacred history of the Incarnation transcends in every way this terrestrial history, but it does not evacuate it. On the contrary, it will consummate, in new heavens and a new earth, all provisory labors and all unsatisfied loves.

Here theology will rejoin one of its favorite contemplations. On several occasions we spoke of "divine government." It is a common expression—which must be severely purified of its anthropomorphism—among the masters of Christian medieval thought. Their *Summas* of theology consecrate an entire section to situating man in the universe, observing substantial connections of his nature with Nature, disclosing his role as *artifex*, and calculating the density of matter not only in his body, but in the fabrication of the universe of which he is in charge. They study matter in these "mutations," these "motions," which are echoed from celestial bodies from circle to circle even in the secrets of spirit and the freedom of men. These medieval doctors even considered the biological laws of nutrition and generation, since, they said, matter "is of importance in the truth about human nature." It is on this subject, with the treatise on divine government, that St. Thomas completes the first part of his *Summa* (*Utrum aliquid de alimento con-*

vertatur in veritatem humanae naturae). Why have modern theologians, accepting the Lutheran split between nature and grace, almost completely abandoned this vision of the world, *natural* framework and spiritual milieu of the action of men at work? The historical dimension which we have to add today, far from reducing its value, multiplies it, just as a third dimension transfigures the surface of space without deforming it.

TODAY'S CIRCUMSTANCES invite Christians to rediscover, in this new dimension, the forgotten vision of their forefathers, which in truth was the biblical vision of nature. We analyzed certain special aspects of our situation at the outset: the revolution of work, which has been effected by the pressure of discoveries and new techniques, has brought about a serious stock-taking, often bitter, but which is based on the truth of things and the truth about man. The proletariat has been the battleground of this coming to consciousness. In fact, the four open perspectives, from the passage from the tool to the machine, in the transformation of work, have vindicated this evolution, and have shown us, along with the new laws of work, the area of their temporary setback: rationalization, the profit economy, concentration, the march of history, have worked together to produce a proletariat. Its revolutionary consciousness regains (but could betray) a scientific consciousness of the functions of work in the 20th century. It is in this consciousness that, like psychology, sociology, or metaphysics, the theology of work could be developed.

It is not by chance, nor by the sole fact of multiplied individual failings, that the world of labor is the nerve center of positive atheism, which is so different from the bourgeois atheism of

¹ The reference is to the author of *Ars catholicae fidei*, of the end of the 12th century, probably Alain de Lille; *Patr. lat.* 210, col. 607-608.

the libertines or the *philosophes*. It is a more serious atheism, but also a great deal more significant.¹ In the very degree to which man has been alienated through his work, he has lost God at the same time as himself. Work could no longer have a religious meaning for him, because he no longer had a human meaning. To restore his density to him, instead of applying various external moral correctives (and political correctives are the most equivocal), would be, theologically speaking, to re-establish him in his cosmic and human function, and in the framework of God the creator. We certainly must not divinize work; but those who succumb to this idolatry, which destroys persons and denies God at the same time, are acting only to satisfy their need of the sacerdot. This deception occurs partly because theology no longer knew how to consider work as an "object" worthy of its attention in the destiny of men.

A reawakened theology will quickly discover its resources and the objects of its inspiration:

Man and the universe: work is located at their junction, as well as at the junction of spirit and matter. Man is master of the universe: the place of God, the vocation of man, according to the formulas revealed in *Genesis*. This should be seen not as an initial prehistoric episode (with a purely static transcendence of God, with nature prefabricated and unchangeable), but in a cosmic unfolding of the divine plan. Man is a collaborator in creation, and the demi-urge of his evolution in discovery, exploitation, and the spiritualization of nature. This action on nature (work) is a divine participation, even in its risk. The *homo faber* belongs by right to Christian humanism, if not to "classical" humanism. The machine

is the instrument of this creative undertaking.

Man himself: He is composed of spirit and matter. Soul and body are not simply in juxtaposition, not joined externally; the emergence of the immortal soul does not reduce the unity of this common life. We may even speak of a consubstantiality of freedom (spiritual) and determinisms (material, technical, economic). Work creates the "human" by the conjunction of the growth of techniques and the consciousness of freedom. The fabricating reason is not other, in its spiritual root, in spite of the difference of methods and functions, than the contemplative reason which is master of interiority.

The total economy of salvation: The cosmos enters there, through man, precisely through the transforming fact of man. The eschatological perspective takes place, in spite of the rupture of death, and does not eliminate the earthly perspective. The former can act as a brake on a naive and erroneous optimism.

Finally, the *Incarnation*. God made man: everything that is human is material for grace. If work takes on a human stability (but only then), it enters into the economy of grace; it enters there twice, both as work of man, and as principle of a community, which is also a world of grace. The Incarnation continued; the Mystical Body of Christ; this theme which from now on will be classic for a spirituality in which the world will find its equilibrium and its Christian position, and not simply by the acquisition of merits.

Is this a new spirituality? No, it is that of *Genesis*, of St. Thomas, St. Paul, of our primary dogmas. But with what an accent, and with what human material it can be renewed! For too long Christians have not taken consciousness of these implicit powers, and their spir-

¹ Cf. Maritain's essay on modern atheism, in *The Range of Reason* (Scribner's).

ity, like their apostolate, has contracted into "the interior life." St. Augustine, master of this interior life in the West, has nevertheless had the sense of the dimensions of the universe and of man, in space and time. In any case, the Christian heritage includes a cosmic spirituality, of which work is one of its axes. The "civilization of work," as has

already been said of the 20th century, the civilization of technics, would in His service be wonderful material for the grace of Christ. We have come to the moment at which the simple and ordinary man has access, by his very status as worker, in the kingdom of God.

Translated by JOSEPH E. CUNNEEN

Notes on other Publications

THE POLITICAL-CULTURAL SCENE

1.

The Dynamics of World History, by Christopher Dawson (Sheed and Ward), is the ripe fruition of a long labor of love. John J. Mulloy has assembled in one volume, and in logical sequence, those writings of Christopher Dawson which best exhibit the vast panorama of his conception of World History. Dawson is not a philosopher of history but rather an analyst of the cultural and social dynamics of the whole human story. His life work is beginning to add up to a sociology of world history but he has done relatively little to draw together the whole of his vision as enunciated, for the most part, in widely scattered passages in his books and articles published in journals throughout the English speaking world. The editor, a true disciple, has done both Dawson and the scholarly world a tremendous service in presenting the hard, basic core of his essential thought in one volume. More than that, he has added a chapter on the development of Dawson's ideas and has so elucidated his conception of the human story in its full range that it will go far towards dispelling much of the present confusion as to the character of his contribution to sound historical thinking.

Dawson, more than he himself realizes at times, walks hand in hand with Spengler. But unlike him he does not regard civilizations and cultures as primary entities. He regards them as societies—common and communal ways of life. They are true societies insofar as they arise from a sense of oneness. They are manifestations of man's aspiration to unity in particular responses to the exigencies of a temporal and ma-

terial existence. This aspiration manifests itself on many levels and in many ways—love, family, village, race, nation, culture, and in the hope for a "one-world"—and is nurtured by the waters which flow from the well-springs of mankind's religions. Unity is a bond of the spirit. It is in the living "sense of oneness" that Dawson locates the source of the dynamics of society and of history. These flow, essentially, from the aspiration of the soul for God.

It is therefore most significant that Dawson's conception of history is revealed, best, in the critiques he has written of Western Man's "philosophies of history" from Augustine to Toynbee. In a sense he has reestablished the Augustinian vision of the "two cities" as the prospect about which Contemporary Man may find his reorientation. Dawson does not turn away from the rich fruitfulness of Western Man's historical and social experience but, rather, tries to stand upon it. Dawson has made his study not as a philosopher and/or a theologian but as a sociologist and a historian. There may be flaws and fallacies in his vision and in his thinking but we stand to gain more through dialogue than through debate with his seminal mind.

Prof. Mulloy's labor has produced a basic book for a long time to come.

2.

Obscenity and the Law. (Secker and Warburg). Despite its English context, with reference to the state of law there in regard to obscenity, this serious study by Norman St John Stevas deserves to be known in America. A Parliamentary Bill which was drawn up by the author

—a Catholic who lectures in Law at King's College, London—is printed as a second appendix. The greater part of the book is a history of English literature from a rather special point of view. It would seem to be of interest to the general reader as well as to those who are concerned with the problem of the formulation of laws in this area. There is a wealth of material which might well be drawn on to organize discussions of art and prudence, and the author demonstrates a keen ability to analyze the social changes in which his "obscurity" problem is to be located.

3.

Movies and Morality. The Editions du Cerf have again conferred a favor on all those who are seriously concerned with the art of the film, and the real problems attendant on their present distribution, with the publication of Father René Ludmann's little book, *Cinéma, foi et morale* (Coll. Rencontres, no. 46). Despite its brevity (144 pages), the book manages to pose the amplitude of many key problems regarding movies,

and although it may not convince all readers, the optimistic tone regarding the possibilities of movies is indeed encouraging. Fr. Ludmann makes clear the inadequacy of trying to distinguish the moral value of various films: "The cinema is a problem of faith more than of morality." He goes beyond the categories of the Legion of Decency in seeing how films can create a climate hostile to religion, or at least unfavorable, but he also insists that, without preaching or "edification" the cinema can be an auxiliary means of evangelization. Whatever further questions or distinctions the reader might have, he will admire the way in which Fr. Ludmann concretizes his earlier generalizations and proceeds to the analysis of what he calls "type-films," including *Brief Encounter* and *Diary of a Country Priest*.

Fr. Ludmann feels the greatest danger of the cinema is not that it is sinful or suggestive, but that it is escapist and unreal and induces a kind of anaesthesia in the addict. He would encourage serious handling of contemporary problems in a realistic vein, and in general his attitude is refreshingly positive.

PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

1.

Catholicism and Ecumenicism. Canon G. Thils has produced an important work for which modern Catholic theology has been waiting, *Histoire doctrinale du mouvement œcuménique* (Louvain, E. Waryn). Compact, well documented, readable, this is a reliable account which shows very well the healthy openness with which a well-grounded Catholic theologian can receive the great contemporary movement towards Christian unity as the most important religious event of our time.

The first part of the work is a large historical and doctrinal sketch of the various stages leading to the World Council of Churches, the development of the Life and Work and Faith and Order movements, the conferences at Stockholm, Oxford, Lausanne, Edinburgh, Lund, and Evanston.

The second part is perhaps more ambitious, since Canon Thils attempts to synthesize the theology of the movement. He takes into account the existence of non-theological factors which play their part in the persistence of divisions, and outlines the Catholic atti-

tude to this ecumenicism, doctrinal reasons for the absence of Rome at these assemblies, the hesitations of some Orthodox and Anglican groups, and finally some judicious reflections on the nature of an ecumenical theology to which other Catholic theologians are invited to contribute as one of the most urgent tasks of the day.

2.

"*The Story of a Soul.*" The flood of books on St. Thérèse of Lisieux which has maintained a high level since the early 1900's will probably grow higher with the arrival of the first published version of the saint's writings which does not radically change her words and ideas. (Cf. Friedrich Heer, "The Saint of a new era," *CROSS CURRENTS*, Fall 1955). The facsimile edition of Thérèse's three major writings (which had been amalgamated into an autobiography in chapters by the editors) has appeared in a four-volume French edition with Introduction and notes in Vol. I, notes and indices in Vol. II, a concordance in Vol. III, and the facsimile text in Vol. IV.

The editor of this long-awaited *Manuscrits autobiographiques de Sainte Thérèse de L'Enfant-Jésus*, published by the Carmel of Lisieux, is Père François de Sainte-Marie O.C.D., a Carmelite historian. His introduction reveals that recent articles, such as the superb textual analysis by Marcel Moré of the authentic Thérésian fragments (*DIEU VIVANT* No. 23, 1953), in which he concluded that the ideas and the very spirituality of Thérèse had been obscured and indeed reversed by the editorial changes, were quite correct and if anything were understatements. The authentic manuscripts consists of two copybooks written by Thérèse under obedience for the Prioress of the time. The first, for whom

she wrote her memoirs of childhood at 22, was her sister Mère Agnes de Jesus. The second, Mère Marie da Gonzague, was prioress when Thérèse's health was failing rapidly and she was persuaded by Mère Agnes to ask Thérèse for a spiritual testimony. A long letter to her oldest sister Marie, (also a nun in the Carmelite convent at Lisieux) in which she had been asked to explain her "little way," completes the volume. Père François tells us that over seven thousand differences were found to exist between the actual hand-written manuscript and the edited version. In fact he prints for us all the deletions of a line or more of manuscript and these omitted lines total as much as one quarter of the entire manuscript.

The significance of the changes and deletions is as shocking as their size. Many all-important human references—the time she was afraid to tell her sister that the intention she had asked her to pray for was the conversion of an unrepentant murderer, the fact that she found it impossible to pray the rosary and meditate on its mysteries at the same time, the statement of her confessor that if it had not been for God's love for her she might have been a devil instead of an angel—were carefully eliminated and the result was a dehumanized Thérèse. The letter to Marie, which contains a magnificent history of her spiritual life under the image of the story of a bird, was badly mutilated.

It is apparent that Thérèse has more to offer than the roses so long associated with her. Her growth in love of God and man was so rapid, and yet was fed only with what Jesus had made available to everyone, seems to hold out much meaning to 20th century man in his struggle to unite with his brothers all over the globe. Her emphasis on God's love for sinners and those without hope, another fact disguised in the

popular edition of her autobiography, is again very pertinent to our time. Surely there will have to be a new biography of Thérèse, but best of all many people will now read her own words. Let us mention just one point which occurs late in Thérèse's manuscript to see how her ideas deserve attention. She had wondered for a long time why Jesus loved his disciples, why he had given them the pledge of his love at the last supper and then died for them on the cross. The answer is they were "poor sinners." The autograph text reveals steady growth of the Christ-life within Thérèse and it holds out hope that this life is eminently, ardently available to all. Let us hope for an early English translation of the saint's real words.

3.

The Character of Man (Harper). The publication of the major work of a man like Emmanuel Mounier should be one of the events of the year in the world of books but there is a real danger of its being almost completely ignored. When Harper brought out *Be Not Afraid* a few years back, it won few major reviews, and was listed by *The New York Times* Sunday Book Review section under "Books of Self-Help." The present work is longer, denser, more technical, and although it provides a brilliant organization of the findings of modern psychological science in such a way as to provide a scientific underpinning for Mounier's Personalism, it is apt to challenge the capacity of the professional reviewer in psychology. For it is also a book which may be brought forward as a profound example of writing that is born out of total human commitment; when Mounier explains why he uses the title *The Character of Man* and not *The Characterology of Man* he says: "We have chosen. This study is not solely a study of man: it is a struggle

for man. No one, incidentally, can deal objectively with man. It is so customary to disguise a particular standpoint by a show of science, that we prefer to declare openly that our science, though honest, is none the less a fighting science."

Cynthia Rowland, an experienced translator of Mounier, has done an intelligent job, with the cooperation of Mounier's widow, of abridging the bulky original. A glance through the table of contents will convince anyone that the essential of the work has been retained. That Mounier was able even to conceive of such a treatise—much less complete it—under the conditions of the German occupation, while he was sharing in the Resistance movement, makes one realize the selflessness of his vocation in giving his life to *Esprit*, creating a center of independent journalistic discussion, and so using himself up that he died in 1949 at the age of 45.

The wealth of learning, the suggestiveness of this book in areas quite apart from psychology—literature, politics, art, morality, religion—can hardly be suggested by arbitrary quotation, but its modesty and maturity may be hinted at from this passage in a section entitled "Beyond Character":

Thus the very object of the study of character is incapable of being known objectively, but not of being known. Characterology is to the knowledge of man what theology is to the knowledge of God: an intermediary science between the experience of mystery and the rational elucidation to which the manifestations of this mystery may be subjected. The analogy may be pushed further. Positive characterology, which treats types and structures as approaches to the mystery of the person, stands out against a dark background of negative psychology, like positive theology and the theology of unknowing. Only personal engagement in the total adventure of man, and widely active comprehension will

give the candidate to knowledge of his fellow that prudent ignorance which is the beginning of wisdom. In spite of its emphasis on moral decision and the metaphysics of the person, characterology is none the less a psychological science. It is located in the zone of contact between objective psychology and metapsychology. It ranks as one of those frontier sciences which link two different planes, and which can never be placed in any purely positive classifications, but which keep the scientific spirit in contact with true wisdom, and wisdom in contact with the scientific method.

Despite its intellectual rigor and some difficult terminology, *The Character of Man* will be read with passion by those who recognize the necessity for a re-examination of man's nature; it is a major weapon for those working towards what Folliet—following Karl Stern—in this issue's lead article calls "The Third Revolution."

4.

The Worker Priests (Macmillan). This disturbing book edited by John Petrie, a collection of documents on the development and eventual suppression of the priest-worker "experiment" in France, is a translation of a volume published in France under the responsibility of those priests who did not accept the directives of Cardinal Feltin in 1954. (Some have since submitted.) Their statements are presented at length, and the whole is obviously intended as a kind of *apologia* for their view of the affair. Although the book will hardly be helpful for the general reader, and its publication is inevitably a source of pain for Catholics, we can only second Fr. H. A. Reinhold's recent *COMMONWEAL* review in which he emphasizes the value of its prayerful reading for all mature Catholics who see the necessity of a "missionary" understanding in the Church

today. The priest-worker experiment was an important event in the life of 20th century Catholicism, and much can be learned, even from the sometimes harsh words of this volume, for the Church will never abandon the world of work. Nevertheless certain real errors can be discovered in attitudes here which must be avoided in future apostolic enterprises.

Perhaps the following recent quotation from Father Yves Congar, O.P. from the beginning a friendly but clear-eyed observer of the priest-worker activity, is worth citing in this connection:

... some men, many of them of an admirable disinterestedness and faith, paid too little attention to the fulfilment of the practical requirements of their priestly condition, as a condition apart, their position of set apart sanctity; for they were literally in anguish before the gulf they had to bridge, before the need for making new contact and of making their presence real (the "being with"). They did not, in any case, like the word "apart," and it is easy to understand them. The worker-priests started from the desire *to be with* the new people, born outside the traditional forms of Christianity, since the Industrial Revolution. To be with them, that demanded they must share their conditions of life, to be working-class and not bourgeois-class, and to be committed to their future and their hopes, to share in it as fully as possible. It was not by a piece of theorizing or by any *a priori* ideology, but because they were impelled by the facts and their own experience, that these priests realized that positive action by the working-class was essential. Then how was it possible to be one with them without taking part in their class-struggle? This, in its turn, meant they must join in Trade Unionism and Workers' Peace Movements, which in a country like France, brings home the question, constant and pointed, of collaboration with Communists—remember that one Frenchman in five votes Communist, with-

out being thereby a member of the party.

That brings up a very grave problem, not only practical, but also theological and doctrinal. In practice, there is the difficulty of bringing this new apostolate into line with the whole organic movement and activity of the Church. Is there not a danger of creating a kind of proletarian Church having its own sort of autonomy and its own sort of religious culture different from that of historic dioceses and parishes? From the point of view of theology of doctrine, the intention of Roman intervention was not, and could not be purely negative. It was to be a recall to the re-

quirements of the priestly state and to the ideal of set-apart sanctity. And it was, at the same time, necessarily stressing the positive aspect laid down by the legitimate authority, outside whose communion there can be no apostolate in the Church: "Una cum famulo tuo papa nostro Pio et episcopo nostro"—"Together with thy servant our Pope Pius and our bishop"—we say in the Canon of the Mass... (*New Life*, Sept.-Oct. 1956, p. 173)

Another balanced account of the book and the delicate problems it brings up was furnished by Father John Fitzsimmons (*BLACKFRIARS*, July-August 1956).

A Point of View

Editors, contributors and readers alike appear to agree that what is most significant and important about *The Commonweal* is that it is an embodiment of a point of view. It is a conclusion reflected in quotations from, and references to, *The Commonweal* in various metropolitan newspapers and other mass media.

This viewpoint is most clearly manifest in *The Commonweal's* editorials each week on events and public issues. It also is developed, less directly perhaps, in a variety of articles on many subjects—social, cultural and political—by such typical contributors as: William V. Shannon, Christopher Dawson, H. A. Reinhold, Bede Griffiths, Francis E. McMahon, Thomas Molnar and Martin Turnell.

The *Commonweal's* approach is perhaps one further degree less obvious in its many literary articles and reviews of current books, movies and plays. But it is also implicit there. The magazine's varied content week by week adds up to an integral whole.

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